



# Spotlight Initiative

**ANNUAL NARRATIVE PROGRAMME REPORT**

**PROGRAMME TITLE: LIBERIA SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE**

**PROGRAMME START DATE: 1 JANUARY 2019**

**REPORTING PERIOD: 01 JANUARY 2020 – 31 DECEMBER 2020**

<p><b>Programme Title &amp; Programme Number</b></p> <p><b>Programme Title:</b> Liberia Spotlight Initiative</p> <p><b>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:</b><sup>1</sup> 00112285</p>	<p><b>Priority regions/areas/localities for the programme</b></p> <p>The Programme targeted five counties: Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Grand Cape Mount and Montserrado. These are prioritized because of the high prevalence of SGBV/HTPs and fewer SRHRs.<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>Recipient Organization(s)</b></p> <p>UN Women UNFPA UNDP UNICEF OHCHR</p>	<p><b>Key Partners</b></p> <p><b>Government:</b> Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Justice; Law Reform Commission; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Internal Affairs; and Independent National Human Rights Commission and National Traditional Council of Chiefs and Elders</p> <p><b>Associated UN Agencies:</b> United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, International Organization for Migration</p> <p><b>Non-governmental organizations and CSOs:</b> CSOs and CBOs<sup>3</sup></p>
<p><b>Programme Cost (US\$)</b></p>	<p><b>Programme Start and End Dates</b></p>

<sup>1</sup> The Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

<sup>2</sup> SGBV/HTPs/lack of SRHRs is prevalent nationwide and is one of the major causes of gender disparities. The Spotlight Initiative will prioritize and sequence interventions/locations based on sectoral analyses (FGM, child marriage, child early forced marriages, domestic violence, rape) using the SCORE index findings and complement them with other studies conducted by different organizations. It will build on the understanding of the gaps in the current SGBV joint programme. The aim is to focus on the first five most affected counties in the first two years of implementation for capacity and infrastructure. The efforts will be scaled up to the remaining counties based on lessons and best practices.

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to Annex C. Also, additional CSOs form the National CSO Reference Group.

**Total Phase I approved budget as per the Spotlight CPD/RPD: USD \$18,665,681**

**Phase I Spotlight funding:<sup>4</sup> USD \$15,844,000**  
**Agency Contribution: USD \$2,821,681**

**Spotlight Funding and Agency Contribution by Agency:**

<b>Name of RUNO</b>	<b>Spotlight Phase I (USD)</b>	<b>UN Agency Contributions (USD)</b>
UNDP	3,097,358	1,086,844
UNFPA	4,363,521	717,328
UNICEF	1,745,875	511,419
UN Women	5,610,859	257,067
OHCHR	1,026,387	249,023
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,844,000</b>	<b>2,821,681</b>

**TOTAL: USD \$18,665,681**

**Start Date: 01.01.2019**

**End Date: 31.12.2022**

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<sup>4</sup> The Spotlight Contribution refers to the amount transferred to the Recipient UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

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## **Acronyms List**

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AWP	Annual workplan
BCR	Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation
C4D	Communications for development
CBO	Community-based organization
CSO	Civil society organization
CLO	Case Liaison Officer
CPS	Comprehensive Prevention Strategy
EU	European Union
FGM	Female genital mutilation
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender-based violence
GBV-IMS	Gender-Based Violence Information Management System
GRPB	Gender-responsive planning and budgeting

HP	Harmful Practices
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practices
IPC	Infection prevention and control
LDEA	Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency
LIS	Liberia Immigration Services
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo Information Services
LNP	Liberia National Police
LRC	Law Reform Commission
LSI	Liberia Spotlight Initiative
MGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NACCEL	National Traditional Council of Chiefs and Elders
NRG	National Reference Group
NSC	National Steering Committee
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSC	Operational Steering Committee
OC	One-Stop Center
PPE	Personal protective equipment
RMNCAH	Reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health
RUNOs	Recipient United Nations organizations
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SGBV CU	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Crimes Unit
SRHRs	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WACPS	Women and Children Protection Section (Liberia National Police)
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

## **Executive Summary**

Despite a slowdown in programmatic activities due to COVID-19 restrictions, in 2020, the Liberia Spotlight Initiative (LSI) achieved major milestones in the overall effort to prevent violence through strengthening critical institutions, laws, and services and engaging the broader community, while also expanding the baseline level of essential response services for survivors and at-risk vulnerable groups of women and girls. A total of 221,287 people including 112,882 Women, 34,533 Girls, 45,545 Men, 28,418 Boys directly benefitted from the programme. And while another 699,858 - including 429,738 Women, 106,699 Girls, 98,389 Men, 65,032 Boys - indirectly benefitted from the programme in the five LSI counties. In June, 2020, the simplified Comprehensive Prevention Strategy (CPS) was widely rolled out and disseminated under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) and in close collaboration with the other line government ministries to lay a strong foundation of prevention alongside response efforts. 150 communities (50 communities in each of the 5 Spotlight Counties) were identified and capacity building trainings, community engagements, dialogues, peer groups engagements, etc. were held involving the various community structures, community members, youth groups including marginalized and vulnerable persons and groups. Over 2,500 printed simplified copies of the Comprehensive

Prevention Strategy<sup>5</sup> were distributed to the 150 communities while 100 copies of the actual Comprehensive Prevention Strategy Documents were distributed to key stakeholders, including national authorities and county level authorities.

New vigor was injected into the programme in October 2020, when the President declared rape a national emergency for the next two years (2020–2022) and outlined specific measures to address sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). A National Anti-SGBV Road Map was designed and developed by key civil society organizations (CSO) and government stakeholders, and strategic technical guidance was provided to ensure synergies and complementarity with LSI. Further, to avoid overlaps and duplication of funding, the LSI technical team played a critical role in providing technical support to the Government during the drafting of the SGBV Roadmap.

This generated the much-needed political will and collective support to end VAWG. The allocation of US\$200,000 for gender interventions in the national budget (Fiscal Year (FY) 2020/21) was a major achievement, especially given that the government is confronted with budget deficit challenges. Additionally, senatorial elections held in December 2020 amidst COVID 19 pandemic impacted implementation of programme interventions, especially in communities, due to movement restrictions, partial lockdowns and local campaigns.

Integrated multi sectoral institutional capacities continued to be built in nine ministries in the security and justice sectors to enhance accountability and due diligence. New officers in the armed forces and in law enforcement, corrections and immigration agencies will undergo training that includes knowledge and skills in gender mainstreaming, preventing, and responding to SGBV and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHRs).

Led by the Law Reform Commission (LRC), the Domestic Violence Law, Inheritance Law and Rape Law were simplified. CSOs conducted massive roll out, dissemination and distribution of the simplified CPS in 150 communities in 3 out of the 5 Spotlight Counties. Afterwards, reporting increased in 23 beneficiary communities, with perpetrators arrested. LSI began developing a communication for development (C4D) strategy that aims to empower communities with knowledge on social behavioral change and will underpin the CPS implementation.

LSI has consistently advocated with the government and CSOs to end harmful practices (HPs) such as female genital mutilation (FGM). Efforts continue to revive past discussions on extending the suspension of FGM practices and establishing a law to end it. These include monitoring the suspension of the Sande Society<sup>6</sup> including the practice of FGM. About 300 zoes<sup>7</sup> were trained in alternative livelihood skills and successfully harvested their first rice crop, demonstrating their commitment to stop perpetuating HTPs as a source of income and livelihood.

Due to COVID-19, a state of emergency was declared on 8 April 2020, enforced with partial lockdowns and movement restrictions. The European Union (EU) Delegation requested that urgent support be provided by LSI, which reprogrammed US\$1.3 million to ensure essential services continued during the partial lockdown and movement restrictions. In light of this, the technical team including the technical focal points from the EU, CSO Reference Group and government line Ministries revised the workplan accordingly which was later presented to the Steering Committee including the EU for inputs and approval. Interventions such as

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<sup>5</sup> Please find link to the full CPS:

[https://unwomenmy.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/dhogba\\_mabande\\_unwomen\\_org/EbIaamVKBCtLo\\_DHR8qHdZkBl6IZy9L-WUIn2PtaAjCJ4Q?e=6DmiQ3](https://unwomenmy.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/dhogba_mabande_unwomen_org/EbIaamVKBCtLo_DHR8qHdZkBl6IZy9L-WUIn2PtaAjCJ4Q?e=6DmiQ3)

<sup>6</sup> Traditional schools, also called bush schools,

<sup>7</sup> Female traditional practitioners of the Sande society who perform FGM.

psychosocial support, counseling, referrals, fistula campaigns, family planning and other services (case management, counseling, access to justice and economic empowerment) were provided to survivors and perpetrators<sup>8</sup> in partnership with MGCSP and CSOs. LSI enabled 1,659 survivors to access medical and counseling services from county One-Stop Centers (OCs) and Safe Homes, which are becoming critical service points for survivors as increasing trust and confidence are built and information about available services is shared with communities.

A total of 1,830 girls under age 17 were reported as victims of violence to the MGCSP Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBV-IMS) for a period of January to September 2020. In addition, 405 girls and four boys were reported to MoJ as child survivors through the SGBV Crimes Unit (SGBV CU) and provided with services. Of the 405 cases reported, 235 rape cases were charged, with 52 sentenced and three acquitted at the time of reporting. Eight short-stay facilities and two Liberia National Police (LNP) Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS) offices were renovated and operationalized in Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount Counties to ensure timely and child-friendly services are available while victims await referral/pending investigation and follow-up. LSI continued to address gaps in data through coordination between data producers (MGCSP, MoJ and the Ministry of Health (MoH)) to ensure uniformity, coherence and use of standardized reporting tools. These ministries signed a standardized GBV Information-Sharing Protocol, data clerks were trained, and a dashboard and web page were developed to handle an expanded GBV-IMS. The dashboard and webpage will be operationalized by the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> second quarter of (30/06/21). This is being implemented in collaboration with the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo Information Services Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo Information Services (LISGIS) and the MGCSP.

LSI has contributed to a marked increase in reporting and provision of response services to girls below 17 through the case management system, which in the past was not available because of limited capacity, skills and resources of the WACPS and SGBV CU. The programme is gradually ensuring that such services are a regular part of the basic institutional systems especially at the county levels.

Although challenging, the partnership with CSOs has had a huge impact on delivering the services needed at community level, particularly because of their presence and proximity in the community. Second government outreach is a major challenge in remote and inaccessible counties due to limited presence in the counties and basic response services are limited where most SGBV incidents take place. This partnership has been further consolidated by working to build a stronger coordination and coherence amongst the different CSOs working in SGBV to collaborate and build stronger mechanisms to link survivors to services and importantly advocate and sensitize communities on the direct impacts of violence on women and girls and long term on the society.

As a UN demonstration fund, to deliver as one, RUNOs have co-located in one office strengthening coordination and partnership, joint single procurements and services including civil society organizations through a single platform was carried out saving time and cost, conducted joint planning and monitoring of the interventions in the field, further strengthened technical coherence through joint collaboration in development of strategies and guidelines in the different outcomes, but also joint communication and visibility of the different activities and

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<sup>8</sup> Psychosocial counselling and empowerment support is being provided to both alleged and convicted perpetrators of SGBV serving sentence and on pre-trial detention. The support is made possible through the social coping centers constructed/refurbished through the Spotlight initiative in the Nimba and Monrovia central prisons. The empowerment support includes the following skills and craft training (tailoring, beads making, soap making, adult literacy and psychosocial counselling services).



events launched during 2020. LSI is jointly implemented by the Government under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection with six other line ministries in close collaboration with the five UN Agencies under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator.

## **Results by the Numbers**

### **Service provision:**

- 42,314 direct beneficiaries (35,336 women, 4,244 girls, 2,547 men, 187 boys) accessed multisectoral services.
- 825 children (375 girls, 450 boys) were provided with health, psychosocial and justice services.
- Mobile family planning and medical services reached 32,712 women and 2,199 men (19,080 people in Montserrado County and 15, 831 people in Lofa County).
- 982 under-17 girl victims of violence were provided with case management support and referral services.
- 982 SGBV victims, including 180 adolescents, were trained in economic empowerment opportunities to support themselves and their families.
- 30 women's and 90 SGBV community structures were set up in 110 communities in the counties.
- 113 community structures were established in LSI counties to track, report and refer SGBV cases.

### **Awareness-raising:**

- 23,405 people (8,460 women, 5,382 men, 4,966 girls and 4,597 boys) from 212 communities received sensitization on SGBV and information about the referral path for SGBV survivors and COVID-19 health guidelines in the five LSI counties.
- CSOs engaged 385 communities, reaching a total of 48,022 persons (10,028 women, 14,410 men, 13,647 girls, 9,937 boys) to create awareness, advocate and share information on SGBV prevention and response services and HTPs, and promote SRHRs.
- A total of 8,915 people (4,580 women, 4,335 men) in the five LSI counties were reached with information about the CPS.
- 8,959 males (5,249 men, 3,710 boys) were engaged through gender-transformative programmes to address violent masculinities and VAWG.
- About 7,000 market women, motorcyclists, taxi drivers and families were reached by awareness-raising campaigns on preventing SGBV.
- 4,675 children participated in awareness-raising sessions to promote good sexual and reproductive health practices and prevention of violence through the Liberia Children's Forum.
- 125 traditional leaders (51 women, 74 men) plus women's groups, religious leaders, community elders, chiefs, etc. were educated about the simplified Domestic Violence Law, Inheritance Law and Rape Law.

### **Capacity-building:**

- 191 officials (69 women, 122 men) benefited from efforts to build multi sectoral institutional capacities in the security and justice sectors.
- 174 officials (88 women, 86 men) strengthened their capacities to deliver timely and quality protection and response services to survivors and at-risk women.
- 300 FGM practitioners in the five LSI counties gained skills in climate-smart agriculture and; savings and loans schemes in which 12 VSLAs have been successfully established, generating a total of LD\$2,149,775.00, which includes shares valued at LD\$2,023,945.00 and social funds of LD\$120,050.00, including fines amounting to LD\$5,780.00; as well as literacy and life skills development, among others
- 245 professionals (64 men, 181 women) in mental health, social work and psychosocial



services were trained to provide psychosocial services to SGBV survivors.

- 51 newly recruited WACPS officers (37 women, 14 men) were trained in providing investigation and reporting with due diligence.
- 148 community-based structures (130 child welfare committees and 18 GBV Observatories) comprised of at least 1,480 members in the five Spotlight counties were activated, through training and provision of operational support.

**Media engagement:**

- The programme engaged with 300 media practitioners (98 women, 202 men) from 66 media institutions on ending VAWG through gender-sensitive investigation and reporting.
- 216 radio talk shows were broadcast, and 18 jingles produced to disseminate information on SGBV prevention and response.

**Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status**

During the reporting year, the COVID-19 pandemic and senatorial elections held in December impacted implementation of programme interventions, especially in communities, due to movement restrictions, partial lockdowns and local campaigns. The government declared a state of emergency on 8 April 2020 and a National Response Center was set up, with 19 thematic pillars working with different government entities to respond to the pandemic. LSI collaborated with two pillars: the Psychosocial and Women, Children and Girls Pillars, which both involved various stakeholders – including ministries, CSOs, development partners and donors – led by MGCSP.

These pillars focused on providing psychosocial and counseling support on the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 to vulnerable women, men, boys and girls. SGBV was emphasized because of increased reports of violence by women and girls confined at home with abusive partners/ parents, aggravated by limited access to support and services.

Prior to the pandemic, data indicated that many children were/are outside of family care (one quarter are not living with either parent). This includes street children, children on the move, and children in institutions or detention centers. They are particularly vulnerable and exposed to discrimination within the community. Restriction measures taken in response to COVID-19 and their impact on family unity and negative coping mechanisms caused children to be at heightened risk of being separated or unsupervised for longer periods. This situation was exacerbated by stay-at-home restrictions, with children suffering from neglect and an increased risk of being abused or exploited, including girls falling victim to SGBV, including child marriage and FGM.

In light of this situation, on 25 March 2020, LSI received a request from the EU Delegation to review the situation of girls due to the stay-at-home restrictions. Broader needs were also reviewed, following the guidance of the Secretariat directive to take stock of programme activities and the ongoing impact of COVID-19, and explore possible steps to mitigate risk and continue essential services. The priority was to reinforce SGBV prevention and continue provision of services within the context of COVID-19. In collaboration with CSO implementing partners, government partners and the EU Delegation, necessary interventions to continue essential services and interventions that required minor adjustments were identified.

The final LSI COVID-19 Plan was informed and guided by the COVID-19 GBV Pillar Plan that involves all of the government, CSOs and donors. A total of 24 activities were identified and implemented, including essential activities that needed to continue as well as revised activities to specifically address SGBV, particularly during the lockdown period. Focus was given to communications and information-sharing to create awareness about both prevention and response to sensitize the public on COVID-19 and SGBV. This was done through different

media channels (radio, jingles, megaphones, posters and helplines) in addition to existing communication strategies at the pillar level to disseminate information on SGBV and SRHRs.

However, some services and interventions related to consultations, reviews and infrastructure involving larger gatherings were kept on hold. Jury trials were suspended during the pandemic period, as decided by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Access to justice for both women and girls was compromised due to the suspension of judicial services. Notwithstanding, to ensure continuity of interventions, various approaches were adopted for several capacity-building, awareness-raising and sensitization efforts in communities; as well as for engagement with traditional leaders and practitioners through the provision of alternative livelihoods so they could abandon the practice of FGM, which earns them income. These various approaches included holding virtual capacity-building sessions such as the South-South experience learning session; media training; and conducting virtual meetings with implementing partners to track implementation progress. In certain circumstances in hard-to-reach areas, awareness-raising and capacity-building sessions were conducted under strict adherence to health protocols such as not gathering more than 10 people, handwashing, mask wearing and social distancing.

During COVID-19, LSI was used as a model of comprehensive partnership, ensuring coherence and synergy, and implementing programmes with a view to ensuring that no one is left behind while also ensuring that women and girls are empowered to take appropriate action to end VAWG. In this vein, while aware that CSOs working on the front lines of the crisis were faced with a huge threat, our mandate to mobilize support and advocate for their efforts became more urgent than ever. In view of this, 25 grassroots CSOs and local women's rights movements plus five CSO Secretariats from the target counties received grants to enhance their response to communities in addressing increased cases of SGBV and the COVID-19 pandemic response.

In September 2020, community members, youth, CSOs and women's rights groups demonstrated due to the rising numbers of rapes and other forms of VAWG in Liberia. As a result, the President, instituted a National Task Force against rape and SGBV in Liberia. Several consultations were held with key stakeholders including CSOs, development partners, and religious and traditional leaders on a road map to end VAWG. The Spotlight Initiative Technical team was engaged in the draft and discussions around the draft roadmap. The technical team provided technical support to the Government (led by the MGCSP) in drafting the roadmap as well as during the validation working sessions. In October 2020, President George Weah declared rape a national emergency for the next two years (2020–2022) and called on multiple stakeholders to develop a National Road Map to end SGBV in Liberia.<sup>9</sup>

The Anti-SGBV Road Map was designed and developed by key CSO and government stakeholders with strategic technical guidance from the LSI technical team to ensure synergies and complementarity with LSI. This progress is attributed to continuous advocacy and the capacity development of CSOs and the women's movement on how to better advocate on VAWG issues and hold duty bearers accountable. The Anti-SGBV Road Map guides future investment on addressing rape and other forms of SGBV and seeks to change the current dynamics of 'business as usual'.

LSI allocated a total of USD \$1,306,703 to support the government through the GBV pillar. LSI COVID-19 interventions included:

- Awareness-raising events by security actors in the WACPS and SGBV CU.

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<sup>9</sup> See: <https://www.rfi.fr/en/africa/20200913-liberia-president-weah-declares-rape-a-national-emergency-after-protests-sexual-assault-gender-based-violence>; [https://www.emansion.gov.lr/2press.php?news\\_id=5191&related=7&pg=sp](https://www.emansion.gov.lr/2press.php?news_id=5191&related=7&pg=sp).

- Revitalizing the hotline numbers that MoJ (SGBV CU and WACPS/LNP) is being supported to monitor, to prevent and respond to SGBV cases to ensure access to justice for SGBV survivors.
- Procurement of information technology equipment for the National Response Hub (GBV call center) to address concerns on GBV, maternal child health and social protection, led by MGCSP in collaboration with MoJ, MoH and other partners.
- Supply and distribution of personal protective equipment ((PPE) raincoats, rain boots, detergents, thermometers, reusable face masks, buckets, scratch cards and hand sanitizers) to MoJ for the LNP, WACPS and SGBV CU to advocate, sensitize and share information on SGBV and COVID-19.
- Supplied 10 motorbikes to support traditional leaders in monitoring and reporting on FGM and SGBV during the pandemic in remote parts of the county.
- Five CSO partners provided with grants to conduct awareness-raising, share information and sensitize communities on SRHRs and prevention of and response to domestic and sexual violence, including awareness of COVID-19 based on health guidelines and prevention procedures.
- Training of trainers and peer-to-peer training was conducted to support different community engagement and outreach approaches such as U-Report, radio and loudspeakers, building on the Ebola experience to prevent and respond to SGBV.
- Provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) kits to peer educators doing small-scale education.
- Supported Child Welfare Committee members such as County Gender Coordinators, social workers, health workers, OSC/WACPS officers). GBV Observatories' focal points were trained on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse to communicate with the community and youth leaders to create awareness of, monitor and report on sexual exploitation and abuse issues.
- Provided PPE and WASH kits to Child Welfare Committees and strengthened their capacity for increased detection and referrals of SGBV cases.
- Set up and operationalized a maternity/childcare/SGBV treatment center at #14 Military Hospital.
- Renovate six short stay facilities of the WCAPs across Montserrado county to provide appropriate accommodation for missing / lost and found/ abandoned children, children in conflict with the law, and child victims/survivors of violence, and SGBV.
- Provide the health facilities of the five LSI counties SGBV/SRHR service provision centers with PPE and infection prevention and control (IPC) supplies.
- Trained psychosocial service providers to support women and girls at all SGBV/SRHR service centers and within communities, including those affected by COVID-19. Provide logistical support, including PPE and IPC supplies to trained psychosocial service providers to facilitate their work during COVID-19.
- Operationalize mobile community family planning services outreach was operationalized in the five LSI counties.
- Supported MGCSP in overall coordination and supervision of psychosocial service provision through provision of monthly transportation incentives to facilitate follow-up and community engagement.
- Continue to provide essential services to survivors, victims and witnesses (providing transport and feeding costs for their court appearances during this period).
- Continue provision of safe accommodation and feeding costs for witness protection during the partial COVID-19 lockdown.
- Advocacy through radio outreach programmes to raise survivors' and witnesses' awareness of available services.
- Continue to engage CSO Secretariats in the five LSI counties and 20 community-based CSOs as an early warning mechanism to provide timely support to community members and SGBV survivors during the COVID-19 situation (follow-up, referrals, raising community engagement, transportation, advocacy, airtime, megaphones, sanitizers and food support).

- Conduct awareness-raising activities using cellular mobile services, loudspeakers, megaphones and drive-throughs with messages on prevention of and awareness about COVID-19 and its impact on women and girls, especially with respect to violence at the household and community levels. Provided PPE and WASH supplies to CSOs for distribution to community leaders and women's/youth groups.
- Produce key messages for airing in different dialects. Produced jingles and skits for airing on Economic Community of West African States and community radio stations.
- Produce infographics for use on social media platforms, and posters for targeted counties. Produced flyers to disseminate among affected populations.

## **Programme implementation status**

By December 2020, all planned interventions for the 2020 AWP were ongoing at different stages. Some were at the inception phase, some near completion. All Programme interventions are on track as per the AWP 2020. Progress and results are described further in this report.

### **Ongoing interventions**

- Integrated multi sectoral institutional capacities continue to be built in nine ministries in the security and justice sectors to enhance accountability and due diligence.
- Operationalization of the 24/7 Service call center is underway. Delays in the operationalization of the call center were due to the slow progress in getting the telecom service provider to provide the 116-hotline number. However, the operationalization is set to begin in January 2021. Efforts are being made to increase awareness and visibility of the hotline for more reporting of issues across the country.
- Regular awareness amongst community leaders (traditional, religious) and community members continued on the Domestic Violence and the Rape Laws including access to SRHR services is ongoing. Also, during COVID 19 information was regularly provided on the NPHIL guidelines on the COVID 19 prevention measures. These were done through smaller groups, public awareness through public address systems to avoid gathering of large groups and talk shows, dramas and skits that carry messages on prevention and referral of SGBV cases and the COVID-19 prevention measures.
- Empowerment of traditional zoes with alternative economic livelihood support ranging from VSLA, business and development skills training, and training in climate smart agricultural program.
- The GBV Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) that was validated in November 2020 and is currently being signed by GBV service providers and actors. The signing process is almost 80% complete. After signing, next step is to print and disseminate to GBV service providers and actors including UN agencies, CSO etc.

### **Completed Activities**

- The training of 360 media practioners in Gender Sensitive Reporting, and Advocacy was completed during the reporting year.
- Conduct of the Inventory for traditional zoes and bush schools
- Capacity strengthening of CSOs in the five Spotlight Counties



## **Programme Governance and Coordination**

### **Partnerships**

#### ***a) government***

LSI is led by MGCSP on behalf of the government. LSI partners with seven government entities. In addition to MGCSP, the other six are MoH, MoJ, the LRC, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, and the Independent National Human Rights Commission. 2020 presented an opportunity to engage at the highest level. In October 2020, the President declared rape to be a national emergency. Among other measures, a Special Prosecutor for rape was appointed and a National Sex Offender Registry was set up, a National Security Taskforce on SGBV was established, and an initial amount of USD \$2 million was allocated to roll out the Anti-SGBV Road Map. This was largely influenced by LSI efforts including provision of technical guidance in the simplified draft, revision and providing technical inputs from the RUNOs, the RCO and the European Union. This helped in ensuring coherence between the original CPS and the simplified version. Equally so, extensive consultations were held, and increased advocacy and awareness created during the development of the CPS as well as its simplification and rollout during the reporting year.

During his State of the Nation address in January 2020, the President expressed his appreciation for the work on the CPS as well the strides made in the previous year on passage of the Domestic Violence Law, which was also advocated by LSI through engagement with legislators, human rights advocates, and traditional elders and chiefs at community level.

As the lead ministry, MGCSP has led the process of fostering government ownership, continuity and sustainability in a coordinated manner by working with all the different ministries, agencies and commissions involved in LSI implementation. The Minister's leadership role with her team at MGCSP has been key in strengthening the strategic partnership with the Executive Office of the President, supported by the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC). This concerted effort by the Minister resulted in the President signing the Anti-SGBV Road Map and the declaration of rape as a national emergency. LSI is a flagship joint program for the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, that was approved in 2019 by the Government.

LSI has helped contribute to the gains made with the validation of the landmark CPS and the Domestic Violence Law, which was signed in 2019 after consistent lobbying and advocacy by various stakeholders. In other partnership efforts, to sustain multisectoral, targeted, gender-sensitive interventions, Gender Responsive Planning & Budgeting (GRPB) was piloted in MoJ, MoH, and MGCSP. This work has increasingly contributed to ensuring gender-inclusive sector plans are reflected in these ministries' annual planning and budgeting, despite budget challenges. For the first time, USD \$200,000 was allocated for gender interventions in the FY 2020/21 annual government budget as a result of the GRPB efforts of LSI and other similar programmes.

LSI has been innovative in supporting partnership and synergy between and among government ministries as well as CSOs during programme implementation. For example, a joint capacity assessment of justice and security institutions (Ministry of National Defense, WACPS/LNP, the Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency (LDEA), Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Liberia Immigration Service (LIS), Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR), SGBV CU) was conducted to identify gaps, and subsequent capacity development recommendations were supported technically. Additionally, four of the nine justice and security institutions' training curricula were also reviewed to mainstream gender and SGBV knowledge in the training of new recruits and revised to ensure integrated curricula to enhance knowledge and capacities.

Moreover, two MoJ units, the SGBV CU and WACPS, were encouraged to collaborate to address VAWG.

## ***b) Civil Society***

Although challenging, the partnership with CSOs has had a huge impact on delivering the services needed at community level. LSI partnered largely with local and grassroots CSOs, including those representing groups of people facing intersecting forms of violence such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual and queer people (also represented on the NSC). The issues around these groups remain challenging but there has been gradual acceptance of their representation at different meetings and activities, and willingness to recognize them as stakeholders.

Partnerships with CSOs have played a vital role in executing the LSI goal of ending VAWG, guided by the principle of 'leaving no one behind', in national and regional programmes. This has enabled LSI to meaningfully reach women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. In the reporting period, existing partnerships were strengthened and opportunities to build new partnerships were explored. LSI established partnerships with CSOs working with women in refugee camps through humanitarian programmes.

Responding to 2019 concerns raised by CSOs that the different UN processes to apply for calls for proposals as implementing partners were time-consuming, complicated and cumbersome, the UN conducted extensive CSO capacity-building and held open day sessions to train them. A major achievement was a joint call for proposals and massive open day for potential CSOs to apply for partnerships through an Expression of Interest using a single partnerships platform. More than 50 CSOs and 100 CSO representatives participated in the orientation session and gained knowledge on using the platform, including the registration process and submission of Expressions of Interest and concept notes. This resulted in the use of one standard process by all CSOs through one platform.

In 2019, a major challenge was coordination among the CSOs because of both a lack of communication and information and competing interests. In 2020, there was regular coordination and collaboration with CSO partners and networks through weekly virtual meetings. This was to ensure synergies of interventions and to track implementation where interventions were supported by the programme but also included information and updates from other programmes supporting SGBV in the counties.

The meetings were crucial to share information and updates on the work done by the CSO Secretariats. They ensured coherence and collaboration based on the CSOs' different comparative advantages working in the different communities, as well as mitigating any risks. This was reinforced by coordination among the CSO Secretariats, which led to the development of CSO clusters working in various sectors in the five LSI counties. For example, in Lofa County, the CSO Secretariat members, in collaboration with the Gender Coordinator, advocated strongly with representatives of traditional leaders and jointly succeeded in releasing a woman from a Sande school (story covered later in the report).

A total of USD \$2.8 million was implemented by the CSOs in close collaboration with the different stakeholders (traditional and religious leaders, community leaders, community members including women, men and youth groups, LGBTIQs, Persons with Disability, etc). at the community levels in all six pillars of the programme from 2019-2020.

## ***c) European Union (EU)***

The EU and EU Member States remain engaged at the programmatic, technical and strategic levels of the programme. The EU has also indicated an interest in working very closely with the government and UN on programme planning, monitoring and implementation. Prior to their disruption by the pandemic, the EU technical focal point participated in regular monthly technical LSI meetings to stay abreast of programme interventions and provide timely feedback on programme adjustments and implementation.

Consultations between the EU leadership, the UNRC and the UN heads of agencies have resulted in concrete improvements to programme and technical collaboration to demonstrate UN Reform to improve programme efficacy. This partnership has enhanced timely decision-making and information-sharing. During the pandemic, the EU technical focal point was invited to participate in the weekly Women, Children and Girls Pillar Response Plan meetings that replaced the monthly TWG meetings.

The EU remains an active partner and provides feedback and advice to the UNRC, UN Agencies and the technical teams. The EU Delegation has indicated a keen interest in being very closely involved in programme implementation and monitoring at the country level. The delegation highlighted the need for increased programme communication and visibility and has helped achieve it through its participation in different events. Such events include the launch of an online media practitioners' workshop on gender-sensitive reporting, and the handover of logistical support (motorbikes) to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) for traditional leaders and county inspectors to monitor FGM interventions.

#### ***d) Cooperation with other UN agencies (associated agencies)***

In addition to the five RUNOs, two associated UN agencies (International Organization for Migration, UN High Commissioner for Refugees) provided a critical interface for working on humanitarian challenges such as cross-border and refugee issues. Women traders and women and girls in refugee camps affected by violence, who are often overlooked, were integrated into the programme as means to further integrate the principle of "leaving no one behind".

#### ***e) Other Partners***

During the reporting period, the programme partnered with members of National Traditional Council of Chiefs and Elders of Liberia (NACCEL), the primary actor to foster increased awareness and understanding of HTPs. NACCEL was given logistical and financial support to monitor the temporary closure of all bush schools, including validating the inventory of zoes and bush schools. In 2020, a comprehensive inventory was completed that will be used to inform the interventions needed to bring changes in social norms and practices through introducing positive traditional practices and alternative livelihoods. The exercise helped consolidate the gains made and continued to bring the chiefs and elders under one umbrella to advocate on the need for change and the need to extend the ban on FGM in the country.

## **Results**

### **Capturing Broader Transformations Across Outcomes**

LSI targets transformations at six outcome levels. However, the results at different outcome levels are also mutually reinforcing and complement each other. Amendments to and awareness of policies and laws benefit from stronger institutions, increase focus on prevention and transform social norms, enhanced by access to essential response services for survivors. During the pandemic, LSI provided technical support to two of the 19 National COVID 19



Response Pillars: the Psychosocial Support Pillar and the Women, Children and Girls Pillar, both chaired by MGCSP. This was done through the providing strategic inputs in the weekly Pillar meetings as well as ensuring coherence of interventions with the Spotlight Initiative.

In the LSI legislative pillar, interventions focused on simplifying legislative and policy frameworks including the Rape Law, Inheritance Law and Domestic Violence Law. Led by the LRC, intensive outreach efforts were undertaken at the community level in the five LSI counties to increase communities' and government officials' understanding of their rights and duties. For example, Liberian English was used to translate the complicated legal text on people's rights. Seven hundred hard copies of simplified versions of the Rape Law, Inheritance Law and Domestic Violence law were disseminated during outreach activities at the county level, with soft copies available on the OHCHR Liberia social media pages. This was the first time this had been done, and the simplified version of the laws received wide media coverage for example by Front Page Africa. This resulted in an increasing number of women and families, supported by CSOs, demanding justice through the formal system and not compromising cases outside of the court. It also strengthened coordination and collaboration between the LRC and the Independent National Human Rights Commission.

Integrated multi sectoral capacity-building is being continuously reinforced to ensure timely, coordinated and coherent services are provided by security and justice sector organizations. The existing training curricula of the LIS, LDEA, LNP and BCR were reviewed, along with an in-depth capacity assessment, to ensure new recruits' are trained to prevent and respond to SGBV as service providers.

Furthermore, three more government ministries were identified for the institutionalization of GRPB and the establishment of GRPB desks,<sup>10</sup> which are critical for mainstreaming gender during budgetary allocations, thus ensuring programme sustainability by addressing and incorporating gender needs and plans during ministerial planning exercises and budgetary appropriation.

While it was challenging to work in conventional ways to promote prevention due to the lockdown and social distancing, increasing messages to promote prevention become even more important in 2020. Therefore, LSI actively engaged in the Women, Children and Girls Pillar to support the reactivation of a call center/hotline led by MGCSP to enable timely support and provision of services to SGBV survivors and at-risk women and girls. The 24/7 SGBV, Maternal Care and Child Protection Call Center was established, and 12 staff contracted for its operation. However, delays in activating the 116 Toll free line during the reporting period and and operationalization will begin January 2021.

Motorcycles were provided to transport NACCEL representatives to monitor the suspension of the Sande Society/bush schools and the practice of FGM in remote communities, led by MIA. This was bolstered by activities to support alternative economic empowerment of traditional practitioners of FGM. A holistic approach to encourage positive traditional practices was initiated through extensive consultations with female traditional practitioners (zoes) on the planning of alternate Heritage and Vocational Centers for the Sande Society. These Centers support different skills development and economic empowerment, going beyond changing negative practices to strengthening self-reliance. This was done with increased messaging and media being trained on gender-sensitive reporting of awareness, prevention and response services during COVID-19, targeting different actors at the national and county levels.

To continue essential services during the pandemic, a mobile clinic was set up to provide access to and information about response services, particularly psychosocial support, at the

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<sup>10</sup> The GRPB Desks are institutionalized in each of the identified ministries and help to ensure GRPB principles during budgetary allocations by these ministries. These structures are anticipated to be permanent for the fact that they are integrated in already existing structures that deal with budget and allocations at these individual line ministries.

community level. Besides providing health services for survivors and at-risk women and girls, Safe Homes, WACPS offices that have child-friendly short-stay facilities, OSCs and refugee shelters were strengthened and rehabilitated to ensure an integrated approach to essential services.

GBV-IMS coordination was strengthened by engaging the different line ministries who produce data on SGBV to use a standardized and uniform reporting and data-collection tool to improve data collection, analysis and reporting. The aim is to provide timely and accurate disaggregated data to inform on SGBV, HP and SRHRs gaps and priorities.

After a tumultuous start in 2019, capacity development and collaboration with CSOs as both implementing partners and beneficiaries has seen marked improvement on managing expectations and relationships between the CSO NRG, government and CSO implementing partners in the programme. Coordination among CSOs and women's right groups was also enhanced. During the pandemic emergency, CSO collaboration has been key to LSI success. CSO involvements have had a catalytic effect that has enhanced the collective voice and advocacy for adopting laws, challenging inequitable gender norms, increasing services, demanding accountability and ensuring that the most marginalized are not left behind in ending VAWG. In total, 17 implementing partners, 30 local CSOs and women rights advocates and five CSO Secretariats reached out to 100,844 people (33,765 women, 25,174 men, 23,579 girls and 18,326 boys) from 747 communities in the five LSI counties. These community members are now aware of issues relating to prevention of and response to SGBV and the referral pathway.

## **Capturing Change at Outcome Level**

### **Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework**

Following the passing of the Domestic Violence Law in 2019, the focus has been to sensitize and inform lawmakers and the populace on their rights and duties, underlined by a rights-based approach. Despite progress in passing and amending laws such as the Inheritance Law (2003), Rape Law (2005) and Domestic Violence Law (2019), their application and implementation continues to be hampered by practical and cultural obstacles. One of these obstacles is the inadequate knowledge of women and girls but also traditional and community leaders and the larger populace of the laws enacted in the Republic of Liberia to guarantee the rights of women and girls and protect them from sexual and gender-based violence, compounded by harmful stereotypes about women and girls which in some cases deny them full autonomy over their bodies and lives including the decision to hold perpetrators accountable by the criminal justice system.

To address the above challenge, an in-depth consultative legislative review was carried out collectively by various government and CSO stakeholders to ensure that laws are in line with international human rights norms and standards, and that the population in the five LSI counties have a better understanding and are benefiting from the three laws. The Inheritance Law, Rape Law and Domestic Violence Law were simplified for easy understanding by the populace so they can know the laws, protect themselves, assert their rights and seek justice when the need arises. The simplified laws were published, and 700 hard copies were disseminated in the counties. Stakeholder sensitization workshops were also conducted in the target LSI counties (even in remote areas), with an emphasis on addressing knowledge gaps on legal frameworks, enhancing the capacity of vulnerable groups (specifically women, girls, people with disabilities and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual and queer community) to advocate for and claim their rights, strengthening the knowledge on these laws of a total of 750 participants, whereof 449 were female.

Prior to the simplification, stakeholder consultations – including with CSOs, the LRC and the Legislative Drafting Bureau – and sensitization activities were held to gather information on the actual implementation of laws and policies. LSI provided technical and financial support and engaged the LRC, government and other partners to conduct awareness-raising activities and convene stakeholder consultations on the three laws. The consultations aimed to identify gaps, propose amendments and/or draft new laws to address the concerns of women, girls and other vulnerable groups including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersexual and queer communities in Grand Cape Mount, Lofa and Nimba Counties. Moreover, in May 2020, professional experts reviewed the Customary Law of Liberia, identified laws that are discriminatory or not gender-sensitive and made recommendations on aligning customary laws with international human rights norms and standards.

At a sensitization workshop in May 2020, 125 (51 females and 74 males) traditional leaders, religious leaders, and representatives of CSOs and women's groups signed a resolution to commit their total support for the utilization of the formal legal framework on VAWG. These leaders now serve as champions of change through cascading knowledge to their communities, which has enhanced community members' knowledge of the legal framework. This engagement has served as a landmark in the fight against VAWG as stakeholders have uniformly and vigorously vouched to advocate to ensure that VAWG is eliminated.

A total of 104 staff and human rights monitors (43 females and 61 males) of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights and their collaborating partners – including MGCSP, MoJ, MIA, the judiciary, the Ministry of Education and CSOs – have enhanced capacities to investigate, document and report on allegations of human rights violations related to SRHRs and SGBV/HTPs. Following the 2019 assessment on the framework for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Liberia, consultations took place with MoJ in 2020 and the elaboration of a regulatory framework to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse initiated.

## **Outcome 2: Institutional Strengthening**

Integrated institutional support and organizational capacity-building of justice and security sector stakeholders was a key focus in 2020. The challenges in coordination and limited capacity have hindered timely delivery of access to justice for SGBV survivors, as evidenced in the data generated by the GBV-IMS. LSI, in coordination with other rule of law programmes, has made a concerted effort, particularly at the county level, to ensure security chain actors (prosecutors, human rights officers, social worker, police officers, nurses/health workers, civil society organizations, traditional and religious leaders) are provided with customized trainings and skills building. Certain national and subnational institutions were targeted to design and implement policies, programmes and activities aimed at preventing and responding to all forms of VAWG. These institutions were chosen because they play a crucial role in translating laws and policies into practice, and in ensuring that no one is left behind in eliminating VAWG.

Similarly, criminal justice chain actors (prosecutors, magistrates, city solicitors, Victim Support Officers, Case Liaison Officers (CLOs), social workers, CSOs, traditional leaders, community leaders, WACPS officers, nurses, gender coordinators, etc.) have enhanced capacities to strengthen response and accountability for SGBV and HPs, and promotion of SRHRs to deliver services as outlined in the referral path.

During the period under review, a total of 191 criminal justice chain actors (69 females and 122 males) working within the informal and formal justice sectors were empowered with technical and logistical skills to enhance accountability and human rights-based approaches in handling SGBV, HPs and SRHR violations in the target LSI counties. A capacity needs assessment was carried out of the nine justice and security institutions (LNP, BCR, LDEA, LIS, Liberia National Fire Service, AFL, Ministry of National Defense, MoJ and the judiciary) in the five LSI counties.

During the validation of the report, government stakeholders identified critical recommendations that will greatly improve their capacities to prevent and respond to VAWG.

Subsequently, 174 justice and security institution officers (88 females and 86 males) were trained in how to better prevent and respond to VAWG cases and how to build institutional frameworks for enhanced protection capacities and services to survivors. This followed a four-day gender mainstreaming training targeting staff of the nine institutions. The training aimed to provide the requisite specialized knowledge and skills to those who are most likely to be first responders to SGBV cases. The in-service training curricula of the LIS, LDEA, AFL and BCR were reviewed, revised and validated with the aim of mainstreaming gender, and preventing and addressing SGBV. SGBV prevention, HPs prevention and SRHRs promotion was integrated into the manuals for these four national justice and security institutions.

At least 30 communities comprising approximately 7,000 market vendors, motorcyclists, taxi drivers, families and individuals across Montserrado County have enhanced knowledge on the effects of SGBV and COVID-19 prevention on women, children and other vulnerable populations and are now able to identify and report SGBV cases in their communities. Messages targeting SGBV hotspots and communities affected by COVID-19 were disseminated on local radio to sensitize communities to negative social cultural norms. Supplies such as PPE, thermometers, facemasks and detergents were distributed to justice and security actors at the SGBV CU and WACPS/LNP in that locality to help prevent and monitor VAWG.

COVID-19 presented challenges related to reporting of SGBV cases due to the lockdown measures. Mobile and radio awareness messages were broadcast, which led to increased awareness about SGBV reporting in 13 districts and 104 communities. A population of approximately 100,000 was reached through mobile and radio awareness-raising efforts. Approximately 245 calls were received from the five LSI counties concerning reports of rape cases following an SGBV CU two-week mobile and radio awareness campaign in July.

Inquiries and follow-ups were made with survivors, witnesses and the police through the Unit's hotline. Similar mobile and radio awareness-raising and radio talk shows in Grand Gedeh County reached out to the 50,000 people in the county. Direct beneficiaries were predominantly men between the ages of 15 and 65. Females constituted approximately 35% of the total population reached using this medium. This intervention led to enhanced reporting of SGBV cases due to increased awareness. The LNP and WACPS shared their mobile numbers as hotline numbers through phone-in radio talk shows, community engagements, town hall discussions using megaphones, and leaflets.

In 2020, efforts were scaled up to train and sensitize 15 CSOs and women's rights institutions of the governance cluster<sup>11</sup> to increase their knowledge and understanding in monitoring the national budget from a gender perspective, including the ability to monitor and track its implementation to ascertain its impacts on gender and marginalized and vulnerable groups. A three-day training on GRPB enabled the CSOs to understand key gender concepts, identify gender issues in Liberia, understand the budget cycle and budget structure, and reflect on how the budget can be a useful tool to address SGBV and HTPs and promote SRHRs. It also created a platform for CSOs to develop an action plan for GRPB watchdog reports. As a result, CSOs produced their first gender budget watchdog report, which is currently serving as an advocacy tool focused on producing evidence on how resource allocation and spending in the national budget addresses the needs of women and men.

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<sup>11</sup> Groupings of CSOs/women rights organizations with cross-cutting programmes to foster an integrated approach to governance that is aimed at improving government planning, decision making and service delivery.



Under the reporting period, the MGCSP, MOJ and MFDP institutionalized GRPB in their Ministries. The institutionalization of GRPB was upscaled in three additional-line ministries (Health Education and Agriculture), bringing the total to six. The issue of capacity building has remained a major constraint in these ministries. While MFDP leads in this process, technicians (budget and finance officers, and Comptrollers) in these ministries have limited capacities to ensure budget submitted to the MFDP captures gender related issues, hence continuous capacity building was done. The establishment of these GRPB units and continuous advocacy from LSI influenced the Government of Liberia to allocate USD \$200,000 in the approved national budget FY 2020/21 to implement GRPB in these six ministries. This will enable sustaining both targeted and mainstreaming of gender programmes by the ministries.

### **Outcome 3: Prevention and Social Norms**

During the reporting period, notable gains were made in prevention and changing social norms to end VAWG, mainly through partnerships with community leaders such as traditional and religious leaders, and CSOs.

The CPS was simplified in June by CSOs, line ministries, CSO NRG members, TWG members and community leaders, and validated by MGCSP. UN strategic technical guidance ensured the original information was not lost in the simplified draft, while the stakeholder team translated it into simplified Liberian English. The simplified CPS contains a translation guide with visual aids for grassroots communities to understand and take required actions for prevention.

It was rolled out in 150 communities throughout the 3 targeted counties (Grand Cape Mount, Montserrado and Nimba Counties), which are now better able to understand, identify and prevent SGBV cases and proactively report them to the nearest service center. Some 8,915 beneficiaries (4,580 females and 4,335 males) – comprising traditional leaders, paramount chiefs, women's group members, county authorities, WACPS officers, health practitioners, youth groups and CBOs – gained increased knowledge about negative cultural norms and behaviors and the effects of SGBV/HTPs/SRHRs. Community Action Plans were developed and are guiding community structures in conducting outreach activities related to ending VAWG.

Associated with increased awareness of the CPS, there was an increase in the reporting of rape cases in 23 beneficiary communities in the target LSI counties, with 11 perpetrators arrested and presently undergoing police investigation for processing to court. In addition, 30 women's right groups and 90 SGBV community networks were established in 110 communities in the targeted counties to monitor, prevent and report SGBV cases. Besides the roll-out and dissemination of the simplified version of the CPS which provided more information on prevention and reporting of SGBV, community awareness was also made on the referral pathways in the various communities. Non-traditional mechanism of reporting were utilised such as the GBV Taskforce group at the County level, the Peace Huts, the GBV observatories, the CSO Secretaires, the Male and youth networks, etc all which led to increased reporting on SGBV. Engaging traditional leaders and religious leaders and empowering them with knowledge on formal laws reduced comprising of cases at community levels as now cases were also being reported through them to the relevant service providers.

LSI is developing a Communication and C4D strategy and corresponding five-year operational/implementation plan informed by the CPS, which is 85% complete. The strategy aims to increase awareness and empower communities with knowledge on social behavioral change related to SGBV and violence against children. Its development has included an extensive review of the existing context and local drivers of violence as well as identifying gaps in knowledge, attitudes, and practices relevant to violence. A five-year implementation plan was also drafted. The implementation of the Strategy will be coordinated by MGCSP and will bring together LSI partners other UN agencies, national and CSO stakeholders.

Support was given to MIA, MGCSP, NACCEL and CSO FGM Working Group<sup>12</sup> representatives who completed a monitoring visit on the closure of all Sande bush schools<sup>13</sup> in the five LSI counties<sup>14</sup> MGCSP, MIA and NACCEL are working collaboratively to ensure an extension of the Seven-Count Policy Statement (which expired in June 2020) for all Sande interventions to ensure FGM is not being practiced.

Some 23,425 community dwellers from 212 communities (8,480 women, 5,382 men, 4,966 girls and 4,597 boys), including traditional, religious and community leaders, have increased knowledge on SGBV and COVID-19 preventive measures as well as information on the referral pathway. This was achieved through disseminating key messages on national public health guidelines<sup>15</sup> and campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping. Community members gained knowledge through community and national radio talk shows with specific messages on COVID-19 prevention and prevention of harmful social norms and practices that lead to VAWG. Sensitization of communities on the Domestic Violence Law, the Seven-Count Policy suspending all Sande interventions, and the CPS was also conducted. Some 21,398 people (7,257 women, 5,382 men, 4,966 girls and 3,793 boys) from 200 communities in five LSI counties benefited from these sensitization activities.

Another major highlight was the buy-in of 8,959 males (5,249 men, 3,710 boys) in 22 communities to ensure positive social attitudes and protection of women and girls through gender-transformative programmes addressing violent masculinities and men's violence toward women and girls. As a result of this engagement, 52 rape cases (96.1% of the survivors of which are under 18) were forwarded to police, with perpetrators arrested and forwarded to court. There were also interventions in 295 GBV/HTP cases which involved persistent non-support, child abandonment, domestic violence, and economic violence.

Thanks to active monitoring and timely reporting by community leaders, SGBV cases are being mitigated at community level. Some 240 key decision makers help prevent SGBV and HTPs and promote SRHRs by referring cases. These decision makers attended a conference on ending VAWG to deepen their understanding and roles as change makers in the fight against SGBV. They cascaded this messaging through use of town centers, posters, radio talk shows and community mobilizers, among others, reaching those in the most remote communities, further integrating the principle of "leaving no one behind".

LSI provided continuous advocacy and strategic technical support to FGM traditional practitioners. They are now demonstrating their commitment and targeted communities are gradually abandoning this practice through adoption of other innovative income generation approaches instead of FGM. Some 300 FGM practitioners in the five LSI counties were provided with alternative means of livelihood, including:

- Engagement in climate-smart agricultural and cultivating consumable crops for sale.
- Savings and loan schemes in which 12 Village Savings and Loan Associations were successfully established, generating a total of LD \$2,149,775 (USD \$12,550).
- Literacy and life skills development, among others.

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<sup>12</sup> The CSO FGM Working Group is a conglomeration of CSOs working together for an end to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The group have drafted a FGM Bill that is pending review and validation by key stakeholders across the country.

<sup>13</sup> [https://unwomen-](https://unwomen-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/dhogba_mabande_unwomen_org/EcfEdZtpoO9EoPm5qYfJrZoBDwNezSCCSk8RLmipoJbMtg?e=6ECpMK)

[my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/dhogba\\_mabande\\_unwomen\\_org/EcfEdZtpoO9EoPm5qYfJrZoBDwNezSCCSk8RLmipoJbMtg?e=6ECpMK](https://unwomen-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/personal/dhogba_mabande_unwomen_org/EcfEdZtpoO9EoPm5qYfJrZoBDwNezSCCSk8RLmipoJbMtg?e=6ECpMK).

<sup>14</sup> (link: Monitoring report for the closure of bush schools.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Including hand washing, face masks and social distancing as outlined by MoH and the National Public Health Institute of Liberia.



*Climate smart agriculture and traditional leaders harvesting their first batch of rice in Sonkey town Montserrado County September 2020*

Traditional zoes' capacity in managing agropastoral and business initiatives activities was strengthened through a six-month programme on climate-smart

agriculture, livestock management, cassava farming, aquaculture/fish farming, financial literacy and entrepreneurship. In Sunkey Town, Montserrado County those who embarked on a climate-smart agriculture programme harvested their first rice crop in October 2020.

LSI continues to support elimination of FGM. Preparatory work commenced on the construction of four Vocational and Heritage Centers which will be used as a center for regular dialogue and life skills and other business development capacity-building, including positive traditional practices provided for young women, replacing the practice of FGM. By December 2020, in Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount Counties, preparation of the land for construction was started. This was a major milestone, as land was allocated by the communities, which was widely contested by both communities and county authorities.

Some 388 media practitioners (91 females and 197 males) from 66 media institutions including 44 radio stations, 13 newspapers, 3 television stations and 6 online/social media outlets were trained to have increased knowledge and skills in advocacy, media engagement and Gender Sensitive Reporting of SGBV cases and ensuring that survivors/victims are not re-victimized or stigmatized. In addition, the training also aided media practitioners in documenting stories that enhance visibility on the issues of VAWG and increase the visibility of SGBV issues in Liberia. As a result, SGBV cases are reported on the media landscape without endangering the wellbeing of the survivors/victims and survivors are no longer perceived by the media and the public as being responsible for the violence perpetrated against them. Media practitioners are also better able to interview survivors and ensure their protection from further violence and stigmatization.

The Liberian National Children's Representative Forum engaged stakeholders on ensuring the rights and wellbeing of children and young people are protected and respected. Similarly, 148 community-based structures (130 Child Welfare Committees and 18 GBV Observatories) comprising at least 1,480 members in the five LSI counties gained specific knowledge and skills to protect and respond to the needs of children. Following this training, members of these institutions increasingly identified and referred cases of violence against girls.

A total of 825 children (375 girls, 450 boys) were reached by health, psychosocial and justice/law enforcement services. Some 4,675 children (90 Children's Forum Members and 4,585 children) participated in awareness-raising sessions on promoting good sexual and reproductive health practices and prevention of violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse. However, there was a 53% reduction in the number of children reached through awareness-raising activities in 2020 compared with 2019, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Outcome 4: Quality Services

Providing integrated services for women and girl survivors of violence was challenged with the restrictions on movement and social distancing. During the reporting period, LSI strengthened the operational capacity of MoH by supporting it to develop an IPC Operational Plan for COVID-19. LSI also provided logistical support including consignments of medical supplies, basic IPC supplies for distribution to 15 highly burdened public health facilities including three hospitals.

A total of 42,314 direct beneficiaries (35,336 women, 4,244 girls, 2,547 men, 187 boys) accessed multisectoral services at county and national levels. Innovative and targeted interventions such as psychosocial support, counseling, referrals, fistula campaigns, family planning and survivor responses (case management, counseling, access to justice and economic empowerment) were provided to survivors and perpetrators in partnership with MGCSP and CSOs as outlined in the Referral Pathway. A Safe Home and a maternal waiting home in Lofa County were completed, and a maternity unit was established at the #14 Military Hospital. With mobile community family planning services, adolescent and young women were afforded the opportunity to access contraceptives despite COVID-19, we can also definitely say that unwanted pregnancies and illegal abortion were avoided. On the other hand, with the establishment of the maternity unit at the COVID-19 treatment center, #14 hospital pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers affected by COVID were able to access all requisite maternity and care health service even during their COVID treatment. They also received timely maternal health care including delivery and caesarean section. The unit will also be used post COVID to respond to the maternal health challenges in the country.

LSI played a key role in reducing maternal mortality and improving access to family planning services as part of providing essential SRHR services. The programme supported the Montserrado and Lofa County Health Teams to conduct mobile family planning outreach services in 16 communities in Montserrado and four health districts with 69 communities in Lofa. About 19,080 and 15,831 clients (32,712 females, 2,199 males), respectively, received different family planning commodities in Montserrado and Lofa counties. A total of 245 mental health personnel, social workers and psychosocial service providers (64 males, 181 females) had their skills enhanced and are currently deployed and supporting women and girls at all SGBV/SRHR service centers and within communities affected by COVID-19. LSI enabled 1,659 survivors to access medical and counseling services from 12 OSCs. The Safe Homes in Nimba and Lofa Counties set up in 2019 provided services to 94 survivors during the reporting period.

Timely and safe deliveries will now be available in the counties because skilled birth attendants in four counties were trained in integrated reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) interventions. About 36 county and district health supervisors (31 females 5 males) also received refresher training in integrated RMNCAH. An analysis of pre- and post-natal services revealed that there was a significant difference and impact on the services provided to women following the integrated training of health staff. In addition, some 21 fistula survivors were identified and mobilized. Twelve of them benefited from fistula repair surgeries and nine cases were scheduled for repairs during the next round.

Special attention was given to the provision of quality case management services to child survivors of SGBV/HTPs to ensure essential services were continued even during the pandemic. A total of 1,830 girls (below 17 years) were reported to the GBV-IMS as victims of violence and HTPs. Of these, 1,284 were rape cases, 271 physical assault, 137 sexual assault and 138 denial of resources. MGCSP was alerted about at least 982 girls' cases through County Gender Coordinators and case management support was initiated. Despite the

pandemic, more children were provided with essential services in 2020.

Some 405 girl and four boy child survivors and witnesses were provided with access to justice and psychosocial support through SGBV CU Victim Support Officers. MoJ indicted 235 rape cases and of the 52 of those cases prosecuted in the five LSI counties, 47 were convicted and three were acquitted. This is a marked improvement in cases successfully being taken to the court and adjudicated. Previously, many were not reported and those that were reported were often quickly settled out of court and compromised. For adult survivors, the SGBV CU submitted 55 rape cases to the Grand Jury; 53 cases were indicted, and two remain unresolved. The SGBV CU tried 10 rape cases and obtained eight convictions and one acquittal. LSI supported 300 witnesses of rape, which included transportation, food and accommodation help from the SGBV CU to ensure their legal representation as witnesses in court proceedings. 180 adolescents were trained in vocational and life skills and benefited from social economic empowerment opportunities.

The 51 newly recruited WACPS officers (37 females and 14 males) were able to deliver specialized care and advice, and immediately attend to SGBV cases in the LSI counties after deployment. They were able to investigate, report and send cases to court with due diligence following their training supported by LSI. A total of 271 survivors, all women, (Montserrado – 95, Lofa – 48, Nimba – 56, Grand Gedeh – 43 and Grand Cape Mount – 29) were provided with psychosocial counseling, feeding and transportation, an emergency package and medical assistance. In addition, 20 survivors received assistance for specialized medical treatment that were unavailable at OSCs, such as surgical repairs and blood transfusions.

The services provided, along with increased awareness, have led to increased survivor trust and confidence because they have been able to approach the police and judiciary and prosecute the perpetrators. During the reporting year, the SGBV CU reported that 217 cases were investigated by police and forwarded to court in the five LSI counties. In total, 1,546 were reported. Of these (97%) were statutory rape, while (3 %per cent) represented adults. About 1,522 (98%) of the survivors in the reported cases were females, while 24 (2%) were males. The most affected age group was 6–12, followed by 13–17 years old. This shows a decrease in comparison to previous year data as 2019 total rape cases was 1,851 with 1,786 (96%) being statutory rape.

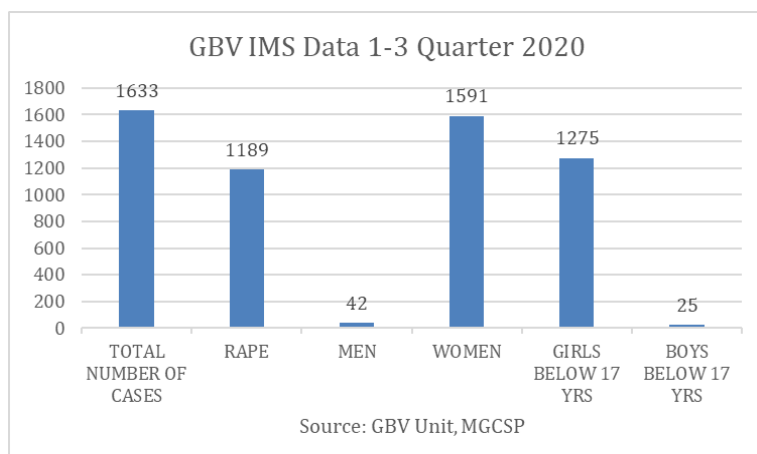
Victim Support Officers conducted 360 counseling sessions for survivors. At least 60% of beneficiaries attended two sessions. Monitoring and investigative visits were also made to 20 police zones in Montserrado County and 50 rape cases that were undergoing investigation were followed up to prevent them from being abandoned, stalled or compromised. At least 203 rape cases were recorded at OSCs. However, according to OSC staff, only 123 (60%) of these cases were forwarded for investigation. The rest were abandoned by the complainants.

Two new modern WACPS facilities were constructed to help fast-track handling of reported SGBV cases and two WACPS offices were renovated. Eight short-stay child-friendly facilities in Montserrado were rehabilitated at WACPS offices used by child survivors as safe spaces, with child- and gender-sensitive temporary care services made available to them pending referral or follow-up actions. Further assessment for additional renovation of WACPS/LNP offices has been conducted in Nimba, Lofa and Grand Gedeh Counties. Prior to this, there were no child-friendly spaces.

LSI supported the establishment of a well-equipped forensic diagnostic unit/system jointly implemented with MoH and MoJ. Liberia currently depends on external forensic services, so two trained forensic pathologists from MoJ are being supported to ensure provision of timely medical forensic services and evidence collection, which is critical to ensure survivors can access justice. A vehicle to enable mobile services, and assorted forensic diagnostic and autopsy equipment were procured for to support MoJ prosecution of SGBV offenses.

## Outcome 5: Data

In 2020, the pandemic underscored the need for proper and timely data to identify gaps and the needs of women and girls, and resources were made available for MGCSP to respond to data-collection needs. A major achievement was enhanced coordination between data producers. To enhance coherence and synergy, a uniform tool was created for the data produced by MoH, MoJ and MGCSP on the different services provided to SGBV survivors. The GBV-IMS tools were standardized, and the GBV-IMS Information-Sharing Protocol was validated in November 2020<sup>16</sup>. Human resource capacities were enhanced by recruitment of data clerks, and a dashboard and web page were developed in anticipation of expanding the GBV-IMS.



Under the leadership of MGCSP, support provided to the GBV-IMS means it is now able to provide accurate GBV data disaggregated by age, sex and demographic information, making it possible to analyze and understand trends and the impact of COVID-19 on existing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities. The integrated online (web-enabled) Performance Management Information System platform is a mechanism geared to ensuring uniform data

collection, analysis and reporting from the source to the GBV-IMS, and onward synchronization to a centralized database/information management system. In 2019 a total of 2,708 GBV cases were reported, 79% were sexual violence; of which 68% were female survivors less than 18 years. 2,105 cases were reported in 2018. 2016, accounted for 1,413, while 1,555 GBV cases were reported in 2015. In the third quarter of 2020<sup>17</sup>, a total of 1633 cases were reported including 1189 incidents of rape. In 2020, survivors accessed response services including 1383 Health Care, 1130 WACPS, 121 Legal Aid, 31 Safe Homes and 41 for Empowerment 41 from 1 Jan-31 October according to the GBV IMS.

Despite the challenge of data collection during COVID-19, SGBV cases were reported to service centers: the GBV-IMS reported a total of 1,830 GBV cases (1,802 female, 28 male) from the five LSI counties, comprising: rape (1,141), sexual assault (306), domestic violence/physical assault (227), denial of resources (137), and others (19). It was revealed that the incidence of rape is high in Montserrado, with 841 cases representing 73.7% of total cases reported. This was followed by Grand Gedeh with 109 cases (9.4%), Nimba with 89 (8%), Grand Cape Mount with 54 (4.7%) and Lofa with 48 (4.2%) in 2020. Of these, 62 cases (5.4%) were sent to court, 21 (2%) were resolved/settled out of court, and three (0.2%) were convicted.

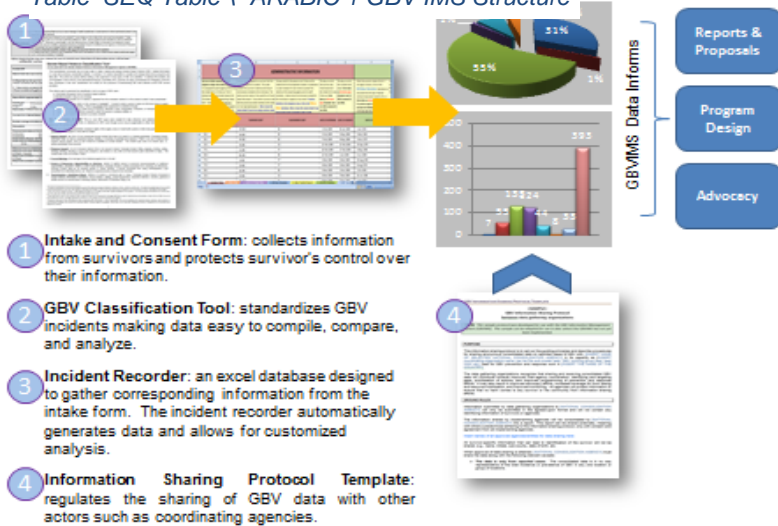
<sup>16</sup> The Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) development was led by the GBV Division of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection in collaboration with all GBV actors. The ISP was validated in November 2020 and is currently being signed by GBV service providers and actors. The signing process is almost 80% complete. After signing, next step is to print and disseminate to GBV service providers and actors including UN agencies, CSO etc.

<sup>17</sup> Data for the last quarter was not available at the time of reporting.



The disproportionality of cases of SGBV in Montserratado to other LSI counties is likely to be attributed to it being the most populous county with the highest population density and most established reporting mechanisms in comparison to the other four counties. Grand Gedeh is second in terms of ranking probably because of the existence of an OSC. The low number of SGBV cases reported in 2020 compared with 2019 (2,105) is attributed to lockdown restrictions such as curfews, underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table SEQ Table 1\* ARABIC 1 GBV IMS Structure



### Outcome 6: Women's Movement

During the reporting period, LSI prioritized its collaboration and partnership with CSOs, CBOs and women's rights groups. This was largely due to lessons learned that during an emergency, it is the community organizations in the counties and districts that continue to engage and work with the people when national organizations are unable to reach them due to remoteness and movement restrictions.



Deputy Minister GCSP, Alice Howards speaking at the Capacity building training for CSOs and women's movement.

LSI strengthened the capacities of 25 grassroots CSOs and local women's rights groups, and five CSO Secretariats from the five LSI counties by providing them with seed grants to respond to needs in the communities in addressing increased cases of SGBV and the COVID-19 pandemic response. With the grants, these local groups reached 385 communities through massive community awareness, using mobile public address A system with large speakers mounted on trucks spreading mobile messaging on VAWG and the referral pathway, etc. A total of 56,021 people (18,028 women, 14,410 men, 13,647 girls and 9,936 boys) were reached with information on SGBV prevention and COVID-19 prevention in the five LSI counties.

Reporting of SGBV cases was enhanced through the distribution of 10 cellphones to leaders in 10 communities who did community policing of VAWG during the lockdown. Three national CSOs<sup>18</sup> were also supported to conduct awareness-raising on prevention and on COVID-19 and its impact on women and girls, especially with respect to violence at the household and community levels. PPE and WASH supplies were provided to CSOs for distribution to community leaders and women's/youth groups. These actions increased reporting of SGBV cases to relevant institutions and contributed to reducing COVID-19 outbreaks in the counties.

CSOs that benefited from capacity-building during the reporting period established a mentorship platform for knowledge- and experience-sharing to integrate coalitions and foster deeper networks to address VAWG. Five CSO Secretariats adopted a joint resolution<sup>19</sup> on addressing critical issues on SGBV, HTPs and SRHRs, which was approved by the National Civil Society Council of Liberia and presented to stakeholders for their necessary action.

To increase wider dissemination of information on SGBV prevention and response, and the COVID-19 pandemic, 216 radio talk shows were held and 18 jingles in various dialects were produced and aired on community radio stations in the five LSI counties. These radio shows increased the opportunity for information exchange and clarification on SGBV issues as participants requested clarity, especially on the referral pathway. Some 113 community structures were established to raise awareness of COVID-19 and SGBV prevention as well as track, report and refer SGBV cases in the five LSI counties.

Some 48 school-age girls in three communities who were being prepared for FGM were released as a result of a CSO Secretariat intervention, in which the head of the Zoe Geh District and the District Zoe Council pledged their unwavering support to ensuring that the practice is aborted in their area. These CSOs and the CSO Secretariats underwent a capacity development training on awareness-raising, monitoring SGBV cases and reporting, which was effective for awareness raising during the pandemic period.

Some 180 CSOs and women's right advocates representatives from the five LSI counties documented 34 key SGBV and HTP issues and 15 key issues affecting SRHRs in Liberia, as well as 24 recommendations for addressing these key issues. Key issues identified included: an increase in teenage pregnancy/early marriages, rape, inadequate government support and willingness to addressing SGBV/HTPs, and the weak justice system in holding perpetrators liable for acts perpetrated against women and girls.

One achievement was the role of CSOs in ensuring accountability of stakeholders in the programme. A total 296 participants (125 females and 171 males) from 100 CSOs are now using their newly acquired skills on social accountability mechanisms and tools<sup>20</sup> including shadow reporting, community score card and universal periodic reporting, and contributing to shadow reports on Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), human rights, etc. following a capacity-building workshop held during the reporting period. The group has also committed to engaging government in increasing court sittings from two to at least four terms, with the government appointing a special judge in each county to adjudicate SGBV cases, in order to fast-track cases and reduce the backlog of cases.

In the context of Liberia, the good practice of networking among civil society actors proved to be beneficial for collective bargaining positions, successful advocacy and increased capacities. When CSO collaborators identify good organizational practices in other CSOs that are practical, realistically achievable and relevant for their contexts, they often replicate them at individual level and sometimes scale them up when working in coalitions. This resulted from a

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<sup>18</sup> Including Research and Democratic Development, Community Health Education and Social Services, and Foundation for International Dignity.

<sup>19</sup> Link: CSO Resolution - June 2020.pdf

<sup>20</sup> (LSI-Social Accountability Narrative Report\_Final.pdf)

South-South virtual learning exchange<sup>21</sup> in which 40 participants from three regional countries (Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal) participated to identify good practices in CSO networks/multi-stakeholder platforms to implement and advocate interventions related to multiple and intersecting forms of violence and discrimination.

### **Reporting on SRHR:**

Through LSI support, an SGBV/SRHR integrated tool was developed and rolled out in 27 LSI-supported health facilities. The rationale was to ensure that service providers initiate counseling at all service delivery points in the health facility to introduce a culture of probing SGBV cases regardless of the primary complaints of clients. This will help providers and stakeholders understand the burden of SGBV at the community level.

This followed a 2019 baseline assessment prior to rolling out the integrated SGBV/SRHR service package. The objective was to determine the status and ingredients for integrated SRHR, HTP and SGBV service delivery through a well-coordinated and functional network at county and community levels, where women and girls who suffer the consequences of HTPs and SGBV can access quality care and SRHRs. Fifteen key issues affecting SRHRs in Liberia were identified and 24 recommendations for addressing them were proposed. This resulted from LSI support to CSOs to identify issues<sup>22</sup> affecting women and girls, and make recommendations, with the objective of promoting their SRHRs.

LSI played a key role in reducing maternal mortality and improving access to family planning services, especially during the pandemic, as part of providing essential SRHR services. Mobile family planning outreach services reached 16 communities in Montserrado and four health districts covering 69 communities in Lofa. About 19,080 and 15,831 (32,712 female, 2,199 male) clients received family planning commodities in Montserrado and Lofa counties, respectively.

Timely and safe deliveries will now be possible and available in the counties because of the training of skilled birth attendants in four counties to enhance their skills and competencies to perform integrated RMNCAH. About 36 County and District Supervisors (31 females, five males) also received refresher training in integrated RMNCAH. Moreover, some 21 fistula survivors were identified and mobilized. Twelve of them benefited from fistula repair surgeries and nine cases were scheduled for repairs during the next round of the campaign.

### **Rights Holders (“Beneficiaries”)**

*The overall number for the Direct and Indirect targeted remain as in the project document. The beneficiaries reached for 2020 are indicated in the Direct and Indirect Actual for 2020.*

<b>Indicative numbers</b>	<b>Direct (Targeted)</b>	<b>Indirect (Targeted)</b>	<b>Direct (Actual)</b>	<b>Indirect (Actual)</b>	<b>Comments/Justifications</b>

<sup>21</sup> (LSI South- South report Final.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> (LSI-Key Issues and Recommendations on SGBV HTPs and SRHR -Final Report.doc)

<b>Women (18 yrs. and above)</b>	333,449	396,783	112,882	429,738	<p><b>Direct:</b> This includes community women, traditional practitioners and members, media practitioners, women representatives from CSOs and Women Rights Organizations involved in community dialogues, training workshops, climate smart agriculture programs, village saving loans and business development and skills training program; Justice and Security institutions officials, number of women reached through mobile outreach activities; women who accessed multisectoral services at county and national levels through innovative and targeted interventions such as psychosocial support, counseling, referrals, fistula campaigns and repairs, family planning and survivor responses (case management) from health centers, one stop centers and safe homes; targeted interventions through simplified legislation and policies on rights and responsibilities of women and communities etc</p> <p><b>Indirect:</b> Includes women reached through awareness raising engagement which included community outreach, distribution of flyers and posters and other related activities held in the 5 Spotlight Counties; women benefiting from justice and security training reached through awareness and strengthened capacities, awareness of rights</p>
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					and responsibilities information and communication shared with other women rights and advocate groups in the communities.
<b>Girls (5-17)</b>	353,926	478,268	34,533	106,699	<p><b>Direct :</b> This includes girls who formed part of the community engagements, street theater, public awareness activities, economic and social empowerment; SGBV child survivors supported through case management services including access to justice/ PSS/ Medical; girls targeted through mobile outreach the justice and security actors in the counties; health services provided through integrated centers including safe homes for SGBV survivors and WACPs facilities including short stay child friendly facilities.</p> <p><b>Indirect:</b> Girls reached through awareness arising on prevention and response services messages and campaigns through the Children’s forum, radio, mobile messages and social media increased during COVID pandemic period by the government and CSOs.</p>
<b>Men (18 yrs. and above)</b>	58,748	674,462	45,454	98,389	<p><b>Direct:</b> Men reached through community dialogues, community engagement activities, traditional leaders, local authorities, community leaders and members, media practitioners, religious leaders,</p>

						<p>members from the 5 male networks, CSO representatives. security and justice male officers trained and capacity strengthened in SGBV prevention and response; targeted awareness on prevention and response through mobile services and call centers; provision of SRHR services on psychosocial services and counseling through mobile clinics in the communities; radio programmes and awareness campaigns; sensitization on legislation and policies on domestic violence and rape. <b>Indirect:</b> Men reached through provision of services, mobile clinics, mobile outreach programmes, radio messages, open air awareness activities, awareness on legislation through community information sharing and awareness by county officials etc. in the five counties.</p>
<b>Boys (5-17 yrs.)</b>	<b>(5-17</b>	73,289	683,859	28,418	65,032	<p><b>Direct:</b> Boys benefited and participated in awareness raising on prevention of SGBV/HP activities through the children's forums; community youth group members, students, members of the He For She Crusaders, engaged in community meetings, dialogues by CSOs; peer counselling, integrated SRHR outreach services through mobile clinics and health centers and mobile outreach services conducted by the justice and security</p>

					officials targeting youth in communities.  <b>Indirect:</b> Youth who were reached through radio messages, flyers, posters; awareness and provisions of SRHR services advocated by the county officials, mobile messages, clinics and awareness and prevention campaigns done.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>819,412</b>	<b>2,233,372</b>	<b>221,287</b>	<b>699,858</b>	

### Challenges and Mitigating Measures

- Several activities being implemented under LSI came to an abrupt standstill due to the global pandemic and the increased spread of COVID-19. This had a significant impact on the timeline for completing activities that required in-person meetings and gatherings. To mitigate this challenge, LSI used virtual meetings and capacity-building sessions. For partners located outside the capital city, a small number of people were trained per session, in line with health guidelines, although this extended the training period.
- The preventive measures imposed by the government to address the COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected women and girls. This reporting period saw a decrease in the number of SGBV cases being reported and in the number of survivors accessing critical SGBV services such as psychosocial support and services to access justice.
- The weak reporting capacity of many partners delayed report submissions. Continuous mentoring and capacity-building sessions are conducted to ensure that reports are results-based and capture real change. The rollout of the COVID-19 response plan exacerbated delays for partners due to various consultations that needed to be done with and among stakeholders including Government, EU and CSO Reference Group. In parallel, the approved interventions had to be first approved by the steering committee before rolling them out. This was mitigated by weekly partner meetings to track implementation and provide technical support where there were challenges, and also through continuous monitoring of the programme at field levels through spot checks.
- Calls for proposals saw delayed and low responses, and national stakeholders have limited absorption capacity to deliver results. These issues were mitigated through establishing a joint open call for proposals and Expressions of Interest. Open days were held for all calls for proposals to brief potential applicants on the application procedures.
- Some culturally sensitive issues supported by LSI, such as ending FGM, need ongoing efforts to maintain buy-in from traditional and religious leaders, cultural elders and community members. LSI continues to work with key stakeholders at every level of implementation and through consultative dialogues to ensure that their voices and recommendations are considered, which is crucial to mitigate any future resistance.
- Inadequate judicial structures, and limited capacity and logistical resources to fast-track the trial of GBV cases has allowed perpetrators to operate with impunity and caused

survivors to lack trust in the justice system. To address this challenge, recommendations have been made in the National SGBV Road Map.<sup>23</sup> They have been addressed in the Road Map workplan through a key activity on decentralizing delivery of justice through Court 'E', which is a special court established in 2017 to only adjudicate SGBV cases.

- Unexpected delays were experienced in the construction of four Heritage and Vocational Centers due to the lengthy process of getting buy-in from community leaders and members. To address this challenge, LSI engaged its partner NACCEL, which helped foster ownership with local county authorities and resolve land accessibility issues. Land with its deeds has now been provided through their support.
- Operational challenges, such as protracted RUNO procurement processes, were addressed by establishing a joint UN procurement process in December 2020. This will be further explored in 2021.
- Partners and stakeholders have low capacity to advance visibility of the programme. Advancing the visibility of LSI remains a challenge because most civil society partners do not have a dedicated communications focal person. While some RUNOs conduct trainings on Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation processes for Implementing Partners, moving forward, LSI needs to provide extensive technical support to build partners' capacity through conducting joint trainings for all implementing partners.
- Efforts to strengthen political will and commitment will need be strengthened to improve programme implementation. There is a need for enhanced coordination within the government line ministries to enable greater impact. In addition, lead line ministries need to showcase political will for LSI to receive continued buy-in for programme implementation. To address this challenge, LSI is advocating for increased political will through platforms such as the NSC co-chaired by the Government and UNRC and technical committee meetings chaired by the government.
- Coordination and partnership between the CSOs and government on programme implementation has been challenging. This has been mitigated by inclusive planning and improved sharing of information and communication at the technical and programme levels, including exploring of joint collaboration and support from the EU/UN to clear bottlenecks in implementation challenges.

## **Lessons Learned and New Opportunities**

- Joint UN procurements: LSI built on lessons learned in 2019, where joint procurement of services was done successfully by multiple RUNOs using a single agency service. In 2020, this was further explored to jointly procure other goods and services for communications, equipment, etc. Operational teams from the RUNOs agreed to procure jointly, and several joint procurements have now been planned which will also help accelerate implementation. This initiative was endorsed by the heads of agencies to avoid delays in programme implementation caused by the various RUNOs' different procurement processes affecting the programme implementation timeline. Since the agreement to joint procurement came near the end of 2020, this will be explored further and implemented in 2021.
- Similarly, LSI leveraged the opportunity of a single partnership platform for calls for proposals from CSOs. Initially, the process to apply for calls for proposals varied across RUNOs, which was confusing for potential CSO applicants. This initiative was

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<sup>23</sup> On 9 September 2020, the Government of Liberia and partners validated the Anti-SGBV Road Map to address SGBV for the next two years (2020–2022). The Anti-SGBV Road Map guides future investment on addressing rape and other forms of SGBV and seeks to change the current dynamics of 'business as usual'.

introduced later than expected but with implementation of the single platform, there was a huge turnout of CSOs at the open day training to understand the one agreed uniform procedure of applying, rather than five different procedures and templates. The Joint Call for proposals in the spirit of Delivering as One as a new way of working was very effective during the reporting period.

- In relation to COVID-19, especially during the period the country was locked down, LSI leveraged virtual platforms to conduct trainings and webinars for various activities such as the South-South learning exchange for CSOs in the region and media training, among others. This approach was very effective and helped both mitigate COVID-19 risks and achieve project results in a timely manner. It is anticipated that LSI will continue to use this approach in 2021 during the period of COVID-19. Use of information technology has been an innovation to bridge gaps and continue the provision of essential services during movement restrictions.

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

One promising practice has been the effort to engage and work with national partners, particularly the community and CSOs, given the context that Liberia is at the humanitarian and development nexus when it comes to planning and implementation of programmes. Therefore, SGBV programmes that are very sensitive and touch on changing social norms often need collective ownership to ensure gains made are sustained.

Constant engagement with relevant stakeholders at national, county, district and **particularly implementation at community level** resulted in the successful achievement of the activities under review. It was also crucial to addressing emerging challenges faced during the pandemic. Most importantly, stakeholder involvement throughout the project cycle helped influence change in the attitudes and behavior of FGM practitioners to dissuade them from the practice. Regular consultative meetings with the traditional leaders and partners including the inventory of traditional zoes as well as the commencement of the provision of alternative economic livelihood and life skills enhanced traditional leaders' buy-in to address FGM. Key traditional practitioners are already engaged in the climate smart agriculture program and the business and life skills training programs and are generating income from their VSLA and small-scale businesses.

By working through CSOs, LSI has increased local participation and ownership, and minimized the risks involved with direct project implementation on traditional norms. This strategy has been effective in reaching the most affected communities because it has created and ensured easy reach, responsive forums, increased buy-in for change from beneficiaries, and significant cost-effectiveness and sustainability.

Having CSO partners in implementation and networking has been a very innovative and good approach to ensure relevant, timely and cost-effective results despite some of the logistical and operational constraints faced by CSOs. CSOs, including vulnerable and marginalized groups facing intersecting forms of violence and discrimination can produce visible and successful results when they start to engage strategically with each other and with duty bearers and rights holders in a coordinated and integrated manner. In light of this, CSOs have successfully harnessed their capacities and efforts toward ending VAWG collectively rather than working in silos.

Provision of alternative economic empowerment to traditional practitioners (zoes) who initiate young women and girls into adulthood, including by performing FGM, is a promising initiative aimed at achieving zero tolerance of FGM in Liberia. LSI's alternative economic support to zoes has increased their commitment and buy-in, which in turn has reduced the practice of FGM in target counties. Zoes have become change agents as they are engaged in awareness-



raising on HTPs, including FGM. Research shows that FGM is not only practiced as a cultural heritage but also for economic gain. It is against this backdrop that LSI seeks to empower practitioners with alternative sources of income that will systematically devalue the practice of FGM.

In addition, building on lessons learnt from the Ebola experience where there was an increase of children affected due to violence and/or abandoned children that needed safe spaces during emergency, LSI supported the strengthening and rehabilitation of short stay facilities or 'safe spaces' through the WACPS offices of the MoJ to provide "child friendly" temporary care with trained police and gender officers at the facilities. Since the 'Short Stay' facilities are meant to provide rapid first aid response pending referral or so, these facilities are designed with special accommodations for boys and girls and so are the bathrooms facilities. Special attention is given to the procurement of non food (clothing, hygiene items (sanitary pads) and toys for girls and boys of all age range). The renovated 'Short stay' facilities include both male and female WACPS officers. This has come to be recognized as a good practice with plans to implement in other counties.

Meanwhile, in situations where government outreach and SRHR services are weak, increasing integrated services for SGBV and SRHR have become the norm to ensure "leaving no one behind". In most communities, where basic health care and medical facilities are lacking, the health centers are providing integrated services for SGBV survivors collectively with other sexual and reproductive health care including counseling, treatment and medical services for women and girls in the absence of a one stop center for SGBV. The programme has set a practice for the government to integrate SRHR and SGBV services working with the ministry of health which has drastically improved the efficacy of essential services for women and girls, which is being replicated in remote and basic health units.

**Please refer to Annex D**

## **Communications and Visibility**

### ***a) Overview***

During the reporting period, RUNOs tried hard to increase communications and the visibility of the programme, particularly by conducting joint events to demonstrate coherence with the government and CSOs. It also ensured increasing visibility at the community level by working through CSOs. During COVID-19, a lot of the communication was done by going back to basics like megaphones installed on vehicles going from community to community, alongside regular print and social and audiovisual media platforms. A total of 23 articles were published in the mainstream media between January and December 2020, while more than 40 posts were published on social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

### ***b) Messages***

#### **Message 1:**

- **Audience:** General public, men, women, boys and girls.
- **Message:** VAWG is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in our world today and the COVID-19 pandemic perpetuates this violence. This must be prevented, reported and stopped.
- The message was effective because it served as a reminder that VAWG is a violation of human rights. This was done using radio and jingles, particularly at the community level, using local radio and local dialects.

## Message 2:

- **Audience:** Women, girls, men and boys; Government of Liberia including MGCSP; partner organizations; donors and other development partners; traditional and religious leaders; CSOs and the media.
- **Message:** Positive traditional practices and social norms must be supported but HTPs must be stopped, particularly the practice of FGM. The Ghanta Declaration on suspension of the Sande Society's harmful practices must be enforced and monitored.
- The message aimed to raise awareness of the need to stop HTPs yet maintain positive social and cultural practices through the extensive communication done on the establishment of Heritage and Vocational Centers and supporting alternative livelihoods. The message was targeted to advocate for further extension of the Ghanta Declaration that expired in August 2020, including Executive Order #92 that forbade the practice of FGM, which expired in January 2020.

### *c) Media and visibility events*

High-profile events held during the reporting year included:

- LSI helped set up the maternity and children's unit at #14 Military Hospital under COVID-19 pandemic support, which was launched by MoH and partners. The event was used to recognize and highlight the need for urgent prevention and response services for SGBV and SRHRs and create awareness about COVID-19 measures and services provided by the programme.
- Close to 300 media practitioners led by the Female Journalist Association of Liberia participated in a series of trainings on gender-sensitive reporting on SGBV in the context of COVID-19 from 2 June to 17 July 2020. The trainings were aimed at empowering media practitioners with knowledge and skills to report in a gender-sensitive manner and to provide them with more information on how to report on SGBV to eliminate VAWG in Liberia.
- The programme recognized and celebrated the first rice harvest produced by traditional practitioners of the Sande Society in November as part of the efforts to introduce an alternative economic livelihood programme. The event brought together the traditional community, government officials, and representatives from the UN, CSOs and CBOs.
- Eight short-stay facilities for children and two offices renovated and established for WACPS were handed over to the Inspector General of the LNP in a symbolic event to reinforce the importance of access to justice services, particularly child-friendly spaces, given that over 70% of all survivors are under 17 years old. The event also emphasized the need for WACPS and the SGBV CU to work collaboratively to ensure timely and effective services are provided to SGBV survivors.
- To increase communications and programme visibility, SGBV prevention and response, and COVID-19 awareness, 216 radio talk shows were held and 18 jingles produced and aired on community radio stations in the five LSI counties.

Below are links to media coverage.

- 5 June 2020: Journalists Trained in Gender-Sensitive Reporting on COVID-19 and SGBV in Liberia: <https://on.mktw.net/2AToyXD>
- 5 June 2020: Journalists Trained in Gender-Sensitive Reporting on COVID-19 and SGBV in Liberia: <https://bit.ly/2YrSXUS>
- 4 June 2020: FeJAL, EU, UN Spotlight Initiative Commence 3-Day SGBV Training for Journalists: <https://bit.ly/3dSk2HF>
- 7 June 2020: Spotlight Initiative Supports Media Training on Gender-Sensitive Reporting On COVID-19 and SGBV In Liberia: <https://bit.ly/37irk4U>
- 5 June 2020: Spotlight Initiative Supports Media Training on Gender-Sensitive Reporting On COVID-19 and SGBV in Liberia: <https://bit.ly/3fiwmBf>



- 5 June 2020: Spotlight Initiative Supports Media Training on Gender-Sensitive Reporting on COVID-19 and SGBV in Liberia: <https://bit.ly/30rCK4W>
- 18 May 2020 - Liberia: Spotlight Initiative Empowers Chiefs to Enforce FGM Moratorium - <https://allafrica.com/stories/202005180440.html> AllAfrica.com
- 18 May 2020 - Spotlight Initiative Empowers Chiefs to Enforce FGM Moratorium - <https://www.liberianobserver.com/news/spotlight-initiative-empowers-chiefs-to-enforce-fgm-moratorium/> Daily Observer
- 18 May 2020 - Spotlight Initiative Empowers Chiefs to Enforce FGM Moratorium - <https://theworldnews.net/lr-news/spotlight-initiative-empowers-chiefs-to-enforce-fgm-moratorium> The World News
- 16 May 2020 - Liberia: UN Women Donates 10 motorbikes to MIA to Monitor Traditional School Closure - <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/news/liberia-un-women-donates-10-motorbikes-to-mia-to-monitor-traditional-school-closure/> Front Page Africa
- 17 May 2020 - Traditional Leaders Embark on Covid-19 Awareness - Received 10 Motorbikes from UN Women - <https://womensvoicesnewspaper.org/read/?id=289> Women's voices
- <https://kmtvliberia.com/traditional-practitioners-benefit-from-alternative-economic-livelihood-activities/>
- 3 June 2020: A coronavirus survivor speaks of joy after childbirth - <https://liberia.unfpa.org/en/news/coronavirus-survivor-speaks-joy-after-childbirth>
- 13 June 2020: Spotlight Initiative funded maternity at COVID-19 Treatment center – <https://newspublictrust.com/spotlight-initiative-funded-maternity-at-covid-19-treatment-center/>
- 15 June 2020: Spotlight Initiative funded maternity unit turned over to MoH – <https://thenewsnewspaper.com/spotlight-initiative-funded-maternity/>
- 26 June 2020: Maternal care units support pregnant women with COVID-19 in Liberia – <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/news/maternal-care-units-support-pregnant-women-covid-19-liberia>
- 29 September 2020: Spotlight Initiative supports COVID-19 and SGBV survivor – <https://thenewdawnliberia.com/spotlight-initiative-supports-covid-19-and-sgbv-survivors/>
- 3 October 2020: Spotlight Initiative provides mental health & psychosocial services – <https://newspublictrust.com/spotlight-initiative-provides-mental-health-psychosocial-services/>
- United Nations Liberia Website - 15 May 2020 - government of Liberia and the Spotlight Initiative launch community engagement campaign to prevent violence against women and girls - <https://liberia.un.org/en/46800-government-liberia-and-spotlight-initiative-launch-community-engagement-campaign-prevent>
- Spotlight Initiative - government of Liberia and the Spotlight Initiative launch community engagement campaign to prevent violence against women and girls - <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/press/government-liberia-and-spotlight-initiative-launch-community-engagement-campaign-prevent>
- <https://www.lr.undp.org/.../justice-ministry-gets-covid-19-pr...>
- [www.inquirenewspaper.com](http://www.inquirenewspaper.com)
- <https://www.lr.undp.org/.../justice-ministry-gets-covid-19-pr...>
- [www.inquirenewspaper.com](http://www.inquirenewspaper.com)
- [https://iredd-lr.org/2020/09/21/iredd-conducts-covid-19-and-sgbv-awareness-in-grand-cape-mount-county/?fbclid=IwAR3csdt4KUbjV3yo338NOzyYZVLqW9aJ0Ga7DTS5cQR52u4i4\\_kUyyYf4m4](https://iredd-lr.org/2020/09/21/iredd-conducts-covid-19-and-sgbv-awareness-in-grand-cape-mount-county/?fbclid=IwAR3csdt4KUbjV3yo338NOzyYZVLqW9aJ0Ga7DTS5cQR52u4i4_kUyyYf4m4)
- 11 August 2020: Validation of Simplified Laws on Rape, Domestic Violence and Inheritance - <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/gender-issues/women-solidarity-inc-partners-validate-simplified-version-of-the-national-women-related-laws/>
- 18 September 2020: Spotlight Initiative Supports WOSI to Create Awareness and Consultation on Rape, Domestic Violence and inheritance Laws in Lofa and Nimba

Counties - <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/county-news/liberia-wosi-carries-out-awareness-on-rape-law-in-lofa-and-nimba-counties/>

- <https://bit.ly/39ram71>
- <https://bit.ly/3iVvvcx>
- <https://bit.ly/3iVvrtj>
- <https://bit.ly/3iW7To7>
- <https://bit.ly/3pwijxe>
- <https://bit.ly/3osGBqw>
- <https://bit.ly/2MvNIS7>
- <https://thenewdawnliberia.com/unfpa-turns-over-spotlight-initiative-funded-maternity-unit-to-govt/>
- <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/health/liberia-unfpa-turns-over-maternity-unit-at-covid-19-treatment-center-to-health-ministry/>
- <https://twitter.com/UNFPALiberia/status/1271091804671217664>
- <https://twitter.com/ndyanabangi/status/1271085034544431105>
- <https://bit.ly/2NlgkdW>
- <https://bit.ly/3sYF92K>
- <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/news/liberia-reproductive-health-kits-save-lives-shadow-covid-19>
- <http://heritagenewslib.com/index.php/health/item/1462-unfpa-donates-assorted-medical-equipment-drugs-and-supplies-to-gol>
- <https://frontpageafricaonline.com/front-slider/unfpa-donates-us400k-assorted-medical-supplies-and-equipment-to-liberian-government/>
- <https://thenewdawnliberia.com/unfpa-donates-equipment-drugs-and-supplies-to-government/>
- <https://twitter.com/UNFPALiberia/status/1249732157033119745>
- <https://bit.ly/3fRXyqR>
- <https://twitter.com/UNFPALiberia/status/1207686331142492160>
- <https://bit.ly/2V64EQt>
- <https://thenewdawnliberia.com/moh-phebe-hospital-and-unfpa-launch-fistula-surgery-campaign-2/>
- <https://bit.ly/2YmdMIP>
- <https://twitter.com/UNFPALiberia/status/1187004357574823936>
- <https://bit.ly/2V7zuYX>

#### **d) Campaigns**

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which exposed women, girls and children to increased risk of violence including GBV, and hampered access to available services, WACPS/LNP was supported to conduct an awareness-raising campaign on the WACPS hotline numbers in the five LSI counties. The campaign was carried out through phone-in radio talk shows and community engagement, town hall discussions by three senior WACPS officers in target LSI counties, use of a megaphone and sharing of leaflets with WACPS hotline numbers. This led to increased reporting of cases during the reporting year, reducing the risk of compromising cases at community level. The objectives of the campaign on WACPS hotline numbers awareness were:

- To create a platform where communities, parents and survivors of GBV will have opportunities to report cases of SGBV and child protection issues in order to easily access service providers.

- To strengthen coordination between and among SGBV actors to ensure that survivors of SGBV access available services, including legal, psychosocial, medical, protection, etc.
- To ensure both prevention of and response to GBV and child protection issues during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- To help communities, parents and survivors understand various concepts, including the SGBV referral pathway and the roles and responsibilities of WACPS/LNP.

To campaign for stronger and consistent monitoring of the implementation of the Ghanta Declaration, LSI supported MIA and NACCEL with 10 motorcycles to be distributed to the counties for the purpose of monitoring the Sande Society during COVID-19 movement restrictions. Please see websites below:

- **15 May 2020:** Government of Liberia and the Spotlight Initiative launched community engagement campaign to prevent VAWG: <https://liberia.un.org/en/46800-government-liberia-and-spotlight-initiative-launch-community-engagement-campaign-prevent>
- **21 May 2020:** Government of Liberia and the Spotlight Initiative launch community engagement campaign to prevent VAWG: [www.spotlightinitiative.org/press/government-liberia-and-spotlight-initiative-launch-community-engagement-campaign-prevent](http://www.spotlightinitiative.org/press/government-liberia-and-spotlight-initiative-launch-community-engagement-campaign-prevent)

#### e) *Human interest stories:*

##### **Story 1: Finding alternatives to FGM**

*Pillar: 3: Prevention and Social Norms*

**Outcome 3:** *Harmful social norms and practices and other forms of GBV are eliminated through inclusive participation, awareness of the negative impacts and through community driven solutions at the national, county, community, household and individual levels.*

**Output 3.2:** *Community Advocacy Platforms are strengthened to develop strategies and programs including community dialogues, public information and advocacy campaigns, to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girl's sexuality and reproduction, self-confidence and self-esteem*

Rose (not her real name) is 17 years old and pregnant, and lives in a rural part of Montserrado County.

“My father said he will not send me to school. If he sends me to school, it will be a waste of his money. My mother does not have any means of keeping me in school. She lives with another man now. I got pregnant with a boy who ran away from me. He says the baby is not his. I had to come here to be near my grandfather.”

She was initiated into the Sande Society as a means of survival, having been abandoned by her mother. Rose is one of the zoe helpers of the chief zoe woman. Rose is confused about why she joined the Sande Society. She believes she does not belong there but with no one to care for her wellbeing, she finds herself among women far above her age.

“We were told that since we don’t have anyone to help us in the town, we should join the Society to get some help. They put pressure on us to join. All the girls in the town were joining. I had to join too.”

Rose soon realized that the help she needed could not be found in the Sande Society. She left once and went to Monrovia to her sister but had to return because her sister could not support her.

“The ideas they have in the society are not good for me. I am a small girl. It is not worth it for me. When they get the money, they share only a little with us and forget about us. If I had someone to help me, I would leave the town and go away.”

Rose is among several girls who are being groomed to continue the practice of FGM by taking over from older zoe women after they retire or pass. She has to first become a zoe helper until she grows up and is mature enough for the practice. Rose believes leaving the town to live elsewhere will help her focus on returning to school or doing business to escape from the society. As an expectant teen mother, Rose is uncertain about her own future and that of her unborn baby. Under conditions of poverty and lack of parental care, being a member of the Sande Society provides security, relief and hope for survival for many girls like Rose.

As Rose has suggested that she wants to go to school and/or engage in some economic activities, linking her to an organization engaged in providing girls’ scholarships and/or a girls’ economic empowerment programme will enable her to achieve her dream for her and her unborn child and also keep her safe from practicing FGM as a zoe helper.

## **Story 2: Spotlight Initiative rescues woman from captivity**

<https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/news/end-bush-school-human-rights-violations-liberia>

*Pillar: 6: Civil Society organizations and Women’s Movement:*

**OUTCOME 6:** *A coherent, inclusive, and empowered CSO and Women’s movement framework to eliminate violence against women and girls is strengthened and operationalized at the national, subnational and community levels.*

**Output 6.1** *Women’s rights groups and relevant CSOs, have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV/HP, and promoting SRHR, with relevant stakeholders at sub-national, national, regional and global levels.*

After spending four months in the bush with her legs shackled as punishment for violating Sande Society traditional practices, 38-year-old Evelyn James\* from Lofa County in northern Liberia is relieved to have been released from captivity after representatives of the Lofa County CSO Secretariat of the Spotlight Initiative intervened and rescued her following a tip-off from a community member.

Ms. James was punished by the Head of the Sande Bush School, a traditional practitioner in Lofa County, for singing a song that is prohibited in their culture while on her way to her farm. The song was about the male component of the traditional practice in which men are initiated into adulthood. As punishment for violating the practice, Ms. James was leg-cuffed in August 2019 and was left to stay in the bush near one of the practice centers until

November 2019, when she was rescued and later released from captivity and torture. She had been given a three-year sentence as punishment.

“After attending a community meeting to provide information on the EU and UN Spotlight Initiative project and how the project seeks to support activities aimed at eliminating all forms of VAWG, one woman approached me and told me that Ms. James was being held in the bush against her will,” explains Boakai Yamah, a member of the Lofa CSO Network Secretariat on GBV and HTPs. The woman preferred to remain anonymous for fear of being reprimanded by traditional authorities in the area.

“I convened a meeting of all GBV task force members, and we contacted all relevant authorities including the County Gender Coordinator, County Superintendent, County Inspector, the head of NACCEL, the district commissioner of Kolahun and Paramount Chief of that Clan, who is the custodian of the culture, to intervene for the release of Ms. James,” he said.

### **Spotlight intervention**

Ms. James was released because of a collective effort by the CSOs under the Spotlight Initiative and other women’s rights groups who advocated for her release. After her release she was sent to hospital, where she was treated for infections sustained from the torture she experienced during her punishment.

“The traditional practitioner responsible for punishing Ms. James has since been fined and suspended from practicing any traditional activity in Lofa by the heads of the NACCEL Lofa branch,” explained Merlin Daniel Dennis, a Programme Officer for the Spotlight Initiative in Lofa.

### **Suspension of harmful practices**

In addition to rescuing Ms. James, CSOs under the Spotlight Initiative coordinated with the NACCEL leadership and some practitioners in the community to suspend the practice of Sande Society activities in Lofa County. Furthermore, all the girls who had been initiated into the traditional bush school were released from the school and all Sande bush schools in the district were closed. “This is the first time that girls were freed from a case of this nature,” said Merlin Dennis.

“Women will no longer be subjected to harmful practices, including FGM, but will live freely in those communities to support their families, while their girls will now focus on education within the conventional school system,” he said.

The Spotlight Initiative is a programme that seeks to eliminate all forms of VAWG, including FGM.

\*Name has been changed to protect the survivor.

## **Story 3: The CSO capacity gap bridged by Spotlight**

### ***Pillar 6: Civil Society and Women’s Movement***

***OUTCOME 6: A coherent, inclusive, and empowered CSO and Women’s movement framework to eliminate violence against women and girls is strengthened and operationalized at the national, subnational and community levels.***



**Output 6.1** *Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV/HP, and promoting SRHR, with relevant stakeholders at sub-national, national, regional and global levels*

Agnes is a founder and currently serves as the Executive Director of the Women Development and Youth Education Center, a women-led, not-for-profit organization established in November 2013. Because Liberian culture usually perceives females as having limited power as leaders, Agnes has always sought opportunities for training that would empower her to prove the stereotype wrong. Hence, she sees the intervention of Spotlight to bridge her capacity gap as a “dream come true”.

“I want to appreciate the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative. Like other CSOs and CBOs in Liberia, the Women Development and Youth Education Center had challenges with limited skills in resource mobilization, leadership, organization development and other relevant skills for the growth and development of the organization. Before Spotlight, we lacked skills in proposal writing, leadership, advocacy, information management and so many things... and so we had many challenges in financing our programmes. However, this programme has helped build my capacity and that of my organization. The capacity-building training has given us the skills to mobilize resources. With the knowledge and skills that we acquired, we were able to apply for grants and for the first time we were successful to be implementing under the Spotlight Initiative. My organization is now a recognized institution. We would not have had such an opportunity had we not participated in this training. I would like to recommend that our donors (EU/UN) continue to provide financial and logistics support to CSOs as we continue to advocate for eliminating VAWG.”

#### **Story 4: Spotlight restores dignity of people living with disabilities**

##### **Pillar 6: Civil Society and Women's Movement**

**OUTCOME 6:** *A coherent, inclusive, and empowered CSO and Women's movement framework to eliminate violence against women and girls is strengthened and operationalized at the national, subnational and community levels.*

**Output 6.1** *Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV/HP, and promoting SRHR, with relevant stakeholders at sub-national, national, regional and global levels*

Bendu Fahnbulleh is the County Coordinator for the National Union Organization of People with Disabilities in Grand Cape Mount County and also a member of the county's SGBV Secretariat under the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative. She explains how the Initiative has changed people's perceptions about persons living with disabilities and helped to restore their dignity.

“I am Bendu Fahnbulleh, Coordinator of the National Union Organization of People with Disabilities. Many women and girls, including myself, have been looked down upon due to our physical condition (disability). Many of my colleagues have suffered SGBV at the hands of men. Many of my friends have been raped and abused. Some

faced abandonment from spouses, leaving them to take care of children single-handedly.

Before the project's interventions, many of my colleagues did not know how to deal with experiences of violence. It has been a taboo for women and girls to talk about rape and to report it. Such violence has existed in families but was hidden to avoid shame, while SGBV survivors were compelled to live with the stigma and endure alone such physical and mental pain. However, our participation in the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative project has restored our dignity as people with disabilities. The project has shown us a pathway to accessing justice that we didn't know about, especially in Cape Mount, where entrenched cultural and traditional practices deny women and girls their basic human rights.

I am very much grateful to the Initiative. Not only did it consider our participation in the project's activities, but it also included me on the Grand Cape Mount SGBV Secretariat as a voice for disabled people across the length and breadth of the county. I am grateful that because of the National Union's representation on the Secretariat, my organization is now enjoying coordination, collaboration and networking support from other county CSOs”.

### **Story 5: Justice served in favor of Sarah, a survivor of rape**

**Outcome 2:** *National Institutions, Organizations and Partners have enhanced technical Capacity and resources to prevent and respond to SGBV and HPs at national, sub-national and community levels.*

**Output 2.1** *Key officials at national and /or sub national level in all relevant institutions are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that respond to prevent and respond to VAWG, including SGBV/HP, especially for those groups of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including in other sectors.*

Sarah Doe (not her real name) is an 11-year-old survivor of rape. This terrible incident occurred on 19 January 2019 in Gbarzon District, Grand Gedeh County, when she was actually 10 years old. Like most rape cases where child survivors are raped by people they know and trust, Sarah was raped by her cousin (her mother's nephew, who is 20 years old).

During a follow-up visit to Sarah, who is now reunified (after staying in a Safe Home for more than a year) with her paternal grandfather on the outskirts of Zwedru City, the following was discovered. Sarah is a beautiful, intelligent, friendly and very outspoken girl. Though only in the first grade (since the incident she is not been back to school), she has dreams and aspirations of becoming a great person in the future. She wants to go to school and become a President of Liberia someday. Behind the scars, there is a potential leader. I intentionally avoided asking her about the incident as I did not want her to relive the trauma. However, wanting to assess her connection with unfolding developments in her case, I asked, “What should happen to the person who did this bad thing to you?” “Let him stay in jail forever so that he does not do it to another girl,” was her response.

In addition to the rape, Sarah explained that her mother and other maternal family members are angry with her because she refused to back off from her case. Demonstrating bravery and strength are indeed some true attributes of a leader. With the support of her paternal family members, Sarah's case was not compromised, which is a common practice, especially when the perpetrator is a family member. According to her paternal aunt, there has been a lot of awareness on the issue of rape/SGBV and why it is wrong to compromise such cases. For her, it is okay to have the family dispute, but Sarah should have justice and other girls in the

community will be protected from the rapist as long as he is in jail. In her words, “No one knows what damage he has caused this little girl for the rest of her life.”

With support from the Spotlight Initiative, Sarah has benefited (and is still benefiting through follow-up and psychosocial support) from a multisectoral case management service. It was through the coordination, networking and referral initiated by a concerned citizen – and ultimately involving an MGCSP case worker, a MoJ Victim Support Officer, the OSC, the Safe Home, the County Attorney’s Office and a CLO – that Sarah was able to receive support. These support systems/structures also empowered Sarah to testify in her case at the Circuit Court through an in-camera process. These multisectoral service providers were supportive in ensuring that Sarah got justice! At the time of my visit to Grand Gedeh County, Sarah’s case was being tried at the Circuit Court. On 9 October 2020, the perpetrator was found guilty and is now serving 10 years in prison. In a follow-up call, I asked Sarah how she felt about the news from the court.... Between laughter she said, “It is good/sweet for him. Let him stay there forever!”

Though delayed, justice was served in favor of Sarah!

#### **f) Testimonials:**

**Testimonial 1:** During the closing session of the Criminal Justice Chain Actors training in 2020, Councilor Isaac George, Director, SGBV CU, encouraged participants to effect change with the knowledge gained, since it aimed to enhance their skills around the criminal justice system in a gender-sensitive manner. He said:

“It is worth noting that capacity enhancement of criminal justice actors for successful implementation of international standards to prevent and respond to VAWG at the national level remains essential. It is the obligation of the government to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of VAWG and such investigations should use techniques that do not degrade women subjected to violence and minimize intrusion, while maintaining standards for the collection of the best evidence. Standards for criminal proceedings, including rules of evidence and procedure, should be conducted in a gender-sensitive manner to ensure that women are not re-victimized. For these reasons, all response actors require the capacity to deal with such violence in a gender-sensitive manner and for this I am most grateful to the EU under the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative for capacitating us”.

**Testimonial 2:** Before the media training conducted in June and July 2020, most media practitioners had limited knowledge about gender-sensitive reporting on SGBV. Following the training, LSI had a close-up with media practitioners who testified thus:

“The training was an eye opener on reporting about SGBV. I’ve participated in several SGBV trainings, but the Spotlight training gave me a whole new perspective on investigating and writing on SGBV issues,” said Alline Louise Dunbar, a journalist with Frontpage Africa. “The training impacted my style of writing on SGBV-related stories as a journalist and made me realize that I am not the expert, so giving the experts the chance to explain the numbers/data of a given story is very important,” Ms. Dunbar added.

“I learned about the various forms of VAWG, including intimate violence, child marriage, FGM, sexual violence, and human trafficking and slavery,” said David Yates, a Media Manager with the Daily Observer.

**Testimonial 3:** Following awareness-raising sessions on the simplified CPS in selected LSI communities, one of the beneficiaries had this to say:

“At first, our parents didn’t know how to report rape cases. Through information gained from the SGBV CPS, parents are no longer willing to compromise rape cases,” said Mariah James, a beneficiary of the EU/UN Spotlight Initiative in Liberia.

**Testimonial 4:**

In his remarks during the rice harvesting ceremony in Todee District, Montserrado County,<sup>24</sup> the head of NACCEL, Chief Zanzan, commended the work that was being done with LSI support. He explained that his organization endorsed the programme as it is not intended to destroy Liberian culture but to modernize it and help it to attain international standards.

“We have come to tell our people that the culture in Liberia is not going to be destroyed but rather it will be modernized,” he said.

**Testimony 6:**

During the monitoring visit to Grand Cape Mount County, the zoes that benefited from business skills training had this to say:

“They taught us how to write and spell our names. They also taught us how to make gardens. We managed to harvest some corn and raised \$20 000 [Liberian dollars] which contributed to our village savings and loan scheme.

“I am happy that, I can now spell my name and my business has also grown. Previously, it was unheard of, that a traditional practitioner could write his or her name but now, we can write our names.

“I used to get \$500 from the ‘bush business’ but now I can raise between \$2000 and \$3000 Liberian dollars. I am now able to pay school fees for my children,” explained Ms. Kromah

**g) Photos:** (including the ones included here in the report) to [PHOTO SUBMISSION PLATFORM](#).

**Photo gallery:** <https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V4mPmQnGviwbKTAfHMF-BIVGUUKIgW/view?usp=sharing>

**h) Videos:** please include active links to any videos that have been produced during the reporting period, including any that document the contributions/results of Spotlight, here in the narrative. Please submit the videos themselves via the [VIDEO SUBMISSION PLATFORM \( Check to upload\)](#)

**Link to videos**

- [https://bit.ly/2\\_YfjkOd](https://bit.ly/2_YfjkOd)
- <https://we.tl/t-Hqu463tnNX>
- <https://web.facebook.com/unwomenliberia/posts/2467937450169893>
- <https://web.facebook.com/unwomenliberia/posts/2466455653651406>

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<sup>24</sup> This was part of the climate-smart agriculture alternative livelihood interventions provided through LSI to persuade traditional practitioners of FGM to debunk the practice.

- <https://web.facebook.com/unwomenliberia/posts/2465062197124085>
- <https://web.facebook.com/unwomenliberia/posts/2464326887197616>
- <https://web.facebook.com/unwomenliberia/posts/2470077659955872>

## **Next Steps**

- Focus will be given to accelerating delivery to ensure the programme achieves its target of 100% delivery by June 2020. Implementation will be done while ensuring meaningful results are highlighted, in addition to laying the groundwork for Phase II.
- Enhance programme visibility by investing more in broader advocacy and visibility initiatives through enhanced partnership with the media and deepening meaningful engagement with the women's movement and civil society. LSI will conduct refresher trainings on communications and visibility for all partners, informed by the Spotlight visibility guidelines.
- LSI will conduct joint procurement of stationery, laptops, printing and other resources needed to facilitate implementation. Less time and resources will thus be spent, allowing programme initiatives to be completed within a shorter timeframe and contributing to better delivery.
- In light of the COVID-19 crisis and its associated impact on the programme. LSI will adopt a new way of working at programme level to deliver effectively. This will include enhancing innovative ways of reporting SGBV cases by use of digital mechanisms and leveraging non-formal service centers to respond to VAWG cases that are not of capital nature, among others. This will help mitigate potential risks related to access to response services, including those related to SRHRs, justice and OSCs, among others. All these will require renewed efforts to avoid delays in programming.
- In 2021, LSI will scale up its commitment and efforts to address the underlying systems and structures that perpetuate VAWG and deny women and girls their rights to access SRHRs, identify non-traditional partners to expand our reach and maximize impact, and continue to document good practices and lessons learned during programming.
- Considering the funding gap in the implementation of ending VAWG, LSI UN technical team will support the MGCSP to step its resource mobilization efforts and develop a resource mobilization strategy that will target new donors that could fund ending VAWG as the EU and the Embassy of Sweden have been doing. Efforts will also be made to deliver efficiently and produce results-oriented timely reports to build donor recognition. LSI will also carry out donor intelligence using historical data on donors who had supported gender equality programming in the past but are no longer present in the country and/or identifying potential donors.
- Partnership with the EU and the EU Member States to be further strengthened through involvement at the planning and monitoring of the programme at the technical and management levels.

### ***Specific next steps***

- Support MoJ through the SGBV CU to cover psychosocial counseling and medical services costs for personnel, accommodation and transport costs for survivors and witnesses, and psychosocial and medical services for survivors.
- Enhance support to CSOs for implementation of key interventions to address SGBV-related cases and promote networking and coordination.
- Support the SGBV CU to ensure monitoring, prevention and response mechanisms to enhance access to justice for SGBV survivors.
- New officers in the armed forces and in law enforcement, corrections and immigration agencies will undergo training that includes knowledge and skills in gender



mainstreaming, preventing, and responding to SGBV and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHRs).

- Operationalise the SGBV Call Center at the MGCSP

## **ANNEXES**

### **Annex A: Results Framework**

*Reporting against the Results Framework will be captured through SMART (the Spotlight Monitoring and Reporting Tool – previously named “Jotform”). Based on the reporting data you’ve submitted to SMART (along with the baseline forms), the Secretariat will generate Annex A for you/your review.*

### **Annex B: Risk Matrix**

### **Annex C: CSO Engagement Report**

### **Annex D: Promising or Good Practices Reporting Template**

### **Annex E: Annual Work Plan**

INTERIM REPORT

## Liberia Annex A 2020

Outcome 1 Summary table					
Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
Indicator 1.1 Laws and policies on VAWG/HP in place that adequately respond to the rights of all women and girls, including exercise/access to SRHR, and are in line with international HR standards and treaty bodies' recommendations.	Legal age of marriage				
	1.00	0.50	0.75	0.00	
	Parental Authority in Marriage				
	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	
	Parental Authority in Divorce				
	1.00	0.50	1.00	0.00	
	Inheritance rights of Widows				
	1.00	0.50	0.50	0.00	
	Inheritance rights of Daughters				
	1.00	1.00	0.50	0.00	
	Laws on Domestic Violence				
1.00	0.25	0.50	0.00		
Laws on Rape					
0.75	0.75	0.50	0.00		
Laws on Sexual Harassment					
1.00	0.75	0.50	0.00		
<b>National level</b>					
Indicator 1.2 National/and/or sub-national evidence-based, costed and funded action plans and M&E frameworks on VAWG/HP are in place that respond to the rights of all women and girls and are developed in a participatory manner.	Evidence-based Rights of all women & girls Participatory Development	Evidence-based Rights of all women & girls Participatory Development	Evidence-based Costed Funded M&E framework Rights of all women & girls Participatory Development	Evidence-based Rights of all women & girls Participatory Development	A sub- National Action Plan is being drafted and plans are ongoing to have it costed and solicit funds for its implementation.
	Sub-National Level				
Does not apply/ there is no plan	Does not apply/ there is no plan	Evidence-based	Evidence-based Costed Funded M&E framework Rights of all women & girls Participatory Development		

Indicator 1.3 Laws and policies are in place that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, autonomous social movements, CSOs and women human rights defenders/feminist activists to advance the human rights agenda.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	There are ongoing discussions on drafting a policy and law that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, autonomous social movements, CSOs and women human rights defenders/feminist activists to advance the human rights agenda.
<b>Output Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Milestone 1</b>	<b>Results for Reporting Period</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Reporting Notes</b>
	Developed or Strengthened				
Indicator 1.1.1 Number of draft new and/or strengthened laws and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination developed that respond to the rights of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards, within the last year.	0	0	1	2	Consultative meetings were conducted in four spotlight counties on three laws(Rape Law, Inheritance Law, and the Domestic Violence Act) relating to women and girls. A Report was drafted incorporating gaps identified and proposals put forth to be submitted to LRC for validation of the proposed amendments. Plans are being concluded to submit proposed amendments to the Legislators
Indicator 1.1.3 Number of draft laws and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination which have received significant inputs from women's rights advocates within the last year.	3	4	1	5	While a lot of progress was made related to this indicator, delays related to parliamentary process, as well as to the restrictions related to COVID 19 did not allow reaching the planned results as per the milestone.

Indicator 1.1.4 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to draft legislation and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination, within the last year.	0	15	25	45	
	Parliamentarians				
Indicator 1.1.5 Number of Parliamentarians and staff of human rights institutions with strengthened capacities to advocate for, draft new and/or strengthen existing legislation and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination and implement the same, within the last year.	0	50	25	100	To further strengthen the capacity of human rights institutions, the training was expanded to include other aspects: documenting and reporting on allegations of human rights violations related to SRHRs and SGBV/HTPs. Plans are being concluded to conduct specialized training for Legislators.
	Women Parliamentarians				
	0	11	0	11	
	Human Rights Staff				
	0	25	104	50	
Women Human Rights Staff					
	0	10	43	50	
	National				
Indicator 1.2.1 Number of evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending VAWG developed that respond to the rights of all women and girls, have M&E frameworks and proposed budgets within the last year.	Does not apply/ there is no plan	Evidence-based	Evidence-Based Costed M&E Plan Needs of All Women & Girls	Evidence-based Does not apply/ there is no plan	Action Plan: National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Management of Gender Based Violence Action Plan: Liberia's Second Phase of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP WPS) (2019-2023)
	Government Officials				
Indicator 1.2.2 Number of key government officials with strengthened capacities to draft and costed action plans on ending VAWG and accompanying M&E frameworks, within the last year.	0	50	25	100	Progress was made on this indicator, but the restrictions related to COVID 19 did not allow reaching the planned results as per the milestone.
	Women Government Officials				
	0	20	10	40	
Indicator 1.2.3 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to draft and cost action plans on ending VAWG and accompanying M&E frameworks.	0	15	45	25	

	<b>Government Officials demonstrate awareness</b>				
Indicator 1.3.3 Number of key government officials with increased awareness of human rights standards and obligations and strengthened capacities to develop laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda, within the last year.	0	20	25	50	In this program output indicator 1.3.3 is to increase and provide sustainable capacity development of CSOs to monitor and report SGBV and HPs cases
	<b>those Officials who participate in developing laws &amp; policies</b>				
	0	20	25	50	
	<b>Women Government Officials demonstrate awareness</b>				
	0	10	10	30	
	<b>Women Officials who participate in developing laws &amp; policies</b>				
	0	10	10	30	
<b>Women Human Rights Defenders demonstrate awareness</b>					
Indicator 1.3.4 Number of women human rights defenders with strengthened capacities to contribute to the development of laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda.	0	15	104	45	The women's human rights defenders include both males and females.
	<b>Contribute to developing laws and policies</b>				
	0	15	20	45	



Outcome 2 Summary table					
Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
Indicator 2.1 Existence of a functioning regional, national and/or sub-national coordination and oversight mechanisms at the highest levels for addressing VAWG/HP that include representation from marginalized groups.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	There also exist county level coordinating mechanism which is the GBV Taskforce as the county level. Name of Coordination Mechanism: National GBV Taskforce, Where is it located: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, including LNOB?: Yes, : National
	Is there a national budget allocation?				
Indicator 2.2 Percentage of national budget being allocated to the prevention and elimination of all forms of VAWG/HP.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	What is the percentage of national budgets being allocated?				
	0.00 %	1.00 %	1.00%	1.00 %	
Output Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	
Indicator 2.1.1 Number of institutions that develop strategies, plans and/or programmes to prevent and respond to VAWG, including for those groups of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination.	0	7	7	14	Name of Plan: Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Operational Plan, Name of Institution: Liberia Immigration Service, Sector: Justice, National/Sub-National: national Name of Plan: Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Operational Plan, Name of Institution: Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency, Sector: Justice, National/Sub-National: national Name of Plan: Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Name of Institution: Liberia National Fire Service, Sector: Justice, National/Sub-National: national Name of Plan: Gender Policy, Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Name of Institution: Judiciary, Sector: Justice, National/Sub-National: national Name of Plan: Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Name of Institution: Ministry of Justice , Sector: Justice, National/Sub-National: national Name of Plan: Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Name of Institution: Armed Forces of Liberia, Sector: Security, National/Sub-National: national Name of Plan: Human Resource Policy and Gender Mainstreaming Handbook, Name of Institution: Liberia National Police, Sector: Security, National/Sub-National: national

Indicator 2.1.5 number of targeted national and sub-national training institutions for public servants that have integrated gender equality and VAWG in their curriculum, as per international standards.	0	4	4	7	Name of Training Institute: Liberia Immigration Service, : National, Sector: Justice Name of Training Institute: Liberia Drugs Enforcement Agency, : National, Sector: Justice Name of Training Institute: Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, : National, Sector: Justice Name of Training Institute: Armed Forces of Liberia, : National, Sector: Security
	Government Officials				
Indicator 2.1.7 Number of key government officials with strengthened capacities to integrate efforts to combat VAWG into the development plans of other sectors, within the last year.	0	50	423	170	
	Women Government Officials				
	0	10	194	40	
Indicator 2.1.9 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to support the integration of ending VAWG into the development plans of other sectors.	0	10	8	40	
Indicator 2.2.1 Multi-stakeholder VAWG coordination mechanisms are established at the highest level and/or strengthened, and are composed of relevant stakeholders, with a clear mandate and governance structure and with annual work plans, within the last year.	N/A there is no coordination mechanism	Established at the highest level Composed of relevant stakeholders With a clear mandate and governance structure	Established at the highest level Composed of relevant stakeholders With a clear mandate and governance structure With annual work plans	Established at the highest level Composed of relevant stakeholders With a clear mandate and governance structure With annual work plans	
Indicator 2.2.2 Number of national and sub-national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms in place that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.	0	3	2	5	Name of the Mechanism: National GBV Taskforce, Sector: Social Services, Including LNOB?: Yes, : National Name of the Mechanism: Women Girls and Children Pillar (COVID-19) Response Plan, Sector: Social Services, Including LNOB?: Yes, : National

	National Level Meetings				
Indicator 2.2.4 Number of meetings of regional, national and/or sub-national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, within the last year.	0	12	12	12	Meetings in persons were suspended due to COVID-19 outbreak in Country
	Sub-National Level Meetings				
	0	12	12	48	
Parliamentarians					
Indicator 2.3.2 Number of Parliamentarians with strengthened knowledge and capacities to hold relevant stakeholders accountable to fund and implement multi-sectoral programmes to address VAWG, within the last year.	0	80	40	103	Progress was made on this indicator, but meetings in persons were suspended due to COVID-19 outbreak in Country, delaying the planned activities.
	Women Parliamentarians				
	0	11	4	11	
Indicator 2.3.3 Number of key government officials with greater knowledge, capacities and tools on gender-responsive budgeting to end VAWG, within the last year.	0	10	25	60	
	0	5	10	25	
Indicator 2.3.4 Number of women's rights advocates with greater knowledge and capacities on gender responsive budgeting to end VAWG.	2	10	40	40	

## Outcome 3 Summary table

Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
	Women				
Indicator 3.1 Percentage of people who think it is justifiable for a man to (subject) beat his wife/intimate partner.	43%	43%	43%	20%	DHS Survey is conducted every 10 years, thus the baseline available is for 2013. In this case, we are using proxy data from the GBV IMS, Ministry of Gender Annual Report 2020. Survey to be conducted in the 5 Spotlight Counties in 2022. This report doesn't measure the percentage of people who think it is justifiable, but rather measures the survivors. In 2020, 1830 GBV Cases were reported. 227 of this number were reported as Domestic/Physical Violence.
	Men				
	24%	24%	24%	12.00%	
	FGM				
Indicator 3.2 a) Percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a woman or girl to FGM (in areas where FGM takes place)  b) Percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a woman or girl child marriage.	49.8 %	40.0 %	49.8 %	39.5 %	Survey hasn't be done on FGM to obtain information on the percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a women or girl to FGM. This information will be available at the end of the program. However, from inventory conducted 495 bush schools closed in the 5 Spotlight Counties in 41 Districts and 822 traditional practitioners documented.
	Child Marriage				
	36.0 %	36.0 %	36.0 %	15.0 %	
Indicator 3.3 Existence of with at least 3 evidence-based, transformative/comprehensive prevention strategies/programmes that address the rights of those marginalized and are developed in a participatory manner.	No	No	Yes	Yes	The comprehensive Prevention Strategy Document was completed in 2019. Following the completion, a simplified version of the strategy document was developed and rollout in 3 out of the 5 Spotlight Counties in 2020. The Communication Strategy is ongoing development.

Output Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes	
Indicator 3.1.1 Existence of a draft new and/or strengthened Comprehensive Sexuality Education in line with international standards	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	CSE curriculum developed pending roll-out.	
	In-School Programmes					
	0	250	0	1,260		
Indicator 3.1.2 Number of young women and girls, young men and boys who participate in either/both in- and out-of school programmes that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and exercise of rights, including reproductive rights, within the last year.	In-School Programmes Girls					
	0	100	0	610	As the result of the E.U. support to the Liberia Children's Forum with guidance from the Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection trained additional 90 members/leaders accumulating to 135 Children Forum Members (35 leaders-2019 and 90 leaders-2020) on prevention and reporting of HP and SGBV. Based on the support provided by UNICEF in 2020, 4675 children ( 90 children's Forum Members and 4585 children) in the selected five counties participated in awareness raising sessions on promoting good sexual and reproductive health practices and prevention of violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse.	
	In-School Programmes Boys					
	0	150	0	650		
	Out-of-School Programmes					
	0	0	4,990	250		
	Out-of-School Programmes Girls					
0	0	2,104	0			
Out-of-School Programmes Boys						
	0	0	2,886	250		
Indicator 3.2.1 Number of women, men, girls and boys who regularly attend community programmes to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women's and girls' sexuality and reproduction, within the last year.	0	33,765	100,844	45,605	As part of the community engagement and awareness programs 747 communities were reached in the 5 Spotlight Counties and are now aware of the prevention and response to SGBV and the use of the referral pathway as well as ensuring gender-equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviours including right to access to SRHR services.	
Indicator 3.2.2 Number of people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, within the last year.	0	1,200	21,398	3,500	Through increased public awareness and campaigns in 212 communities in the 5 Spotlight Counties which included sensitization on the laws and policies that protect women and girls from all forms of violence including ending FGM.	



	Total				
Indicator 3.2.3 Number of men and boys who regularly attend gender transformative programmes addressing violent masculinities and men's violence towards women and girls in community centres, schools and other relevant spaces, within the last year.	0	500	8,959	1800	A total of 8,959 males (5,249 men and 3,710 boys) have attended gender transformative programmes on addressing masculinity and violence in their community and have committed to ensuring positive social attitudes and protection of women and girls in their communities. These males are organized male networks in 22 communities in the 5 Spotlight Counties.
	Men				
	0	300	5,249	1000	
	Boys				
	0	200	3,710	800	
Indicator 3.2.4 Number of communities with advocacy platforms established and/or strengthened to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls' sexuality and reproduction.	24	344	344	744	344 communities have established male networks, women rights groups, and SGBV community structures aimed at addressing social norms, attitudes, and behavior.
Indicator 3.2.5 Number of campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, including of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, developed and disseminated during the past year.	5	2	2	10	2 campaigns were held during the period under review. This included the observance of the 16 Days of Activism, which was conducted at the national and community levels, and the observance of the zero tolerance for FGM which was conducted in 5 selected communities, one in each of the Spotlight Counties.
Indicator 3.2.6 Number of networks of men and boys developed and/or strengthened to advocate against VAWG and stand for promoting gender equitable values and behaviours during the past year.	21	9	5	38	In support of ensuring positive social attitudes and protection of women and girls in communities centre, schools and other relevant spaces, 5 male networks are working on the advancement of the rights of women and girls through advocacy in promoting the fight against violence and other harmful practices in 22 communities in the 5 Spotlight Counties. This initiative has resulted in 52 rape cases (96.1% of the survivors below 18 years) being forwarded to police with perpetrators arrested and forwarded to court. There were also interventions in 295 GBV/HP cases which involved persistent nonsupport, child abandonment, domestic violence and economic violence.
Indicator 3.3.1 Number of news outlets that develop standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting, within the last year.	0	10	10	20	10 out of the 66 media institutions trained have in place standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting. The rest of the media institutions are being worked with to develop the same and ensure there is a media desk established to support ethical and gender issues and reporting.

<p>Indicator 3.3.2 Number of relevant non-state institutions that have developed and/or strengthened strategies/policies on ending VAWG and promoting gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls' rights, including those groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, in line with international HR standards, within the last year.</p>	10	25	0	65	
<p>Indicator 3.3.3 Number of news and other media stories/reports that sensitively report on VAWG and GEWE more broadly, in the last year.</p>	0	5	7	20	<p>7 Media Institutions whose reporters formed part of the fellowship programs for mentorship reported on VAWG and GEWE activities more broadly taking into consideration the rules of gender sensitive reporting. These institutions included the Daily Observer, Frontpage Africa, New Republic Newspaper, KMTV online Newspaper and Television, Bush Chicken, the Inquirer Newspaper and the Prime FM Radio Station.</p>
Journalists					
<p>Indicator 3.3.4 Number of journalists with strengthened capacity to sensitively report on VAWG and GEWE more broadly.</p>	0	338	388	438	<p>388 media practitioners (91 females and 197 males) from 66 media institutions including 44 radio stations, 13 Newspapers, 3 television stations and 6 online/social media outlets have increased knowledge and skills to report SGBV and other gender stories in a gender sensitive manner.</p>
Women Journalists					
	0	91	91	121	
Decision Makers					
<p>Indicator 3.3.5 Number of key informal decision makers and decision makers in relevant institutions with strengthened awareness of and capacities to advocate for implementation of legislation and policies on ending VAWG and for gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls' rights, within the last year.</p>	0	788	788	2,958	<p>788 key decision-makers (388 media practitioners, 150 pastors, 75 Muslim leaders and 175 community leaders committed themselves to serve as agents of change and gatekeepers in the prevention of SGBV and referral of cases utilizing the referral pathway information throughout the 5 counties.</p>
Women Decision Makers					
	0	250	144	605	

## Outcome 4 Summary table

Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes	
	Reported					
Indicator 4.2 a) number of VAWG cases reported to the police; b) number of cases reported to the police that are brought to court; and c) number of cases reported to the police that resulted in convictions of perpetrators.	2,105	1,500	405	4,350		
	Brought to Court					
	126	1,000	405	3,819		
Convictions						
63	500	235	2,673			
Output Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes	
	Women					
Indicator 4.1.2 Number of women and girls with access to programmes developed to integrate VAWG response into SRH, education and migration services.	0	95	17,215	396	The programme had originally not planned on targeting related activities to girls under 18, however, conversations with government representatives and opportunities with implementing partners allowed extending and adapting programmes to reach adolescent girls in targeted communities.	
	Girls					
0	0	15,497	0			
Government Service Providers						
Indicator 4.1.4 Number of government service providers who have increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence, within the last year.	0	60	506	200	Training for justice and security institution officers to enhanced protection capacities and services to survivors. Integrated training for skilled birth attendants Mental Health Psychosocial Support Training	
	Women Government Service Providers					
0	50	337	165			

Indicator 4.2.1 Number of women and girl survivors of violence and their families including groups facing multiple and intersecting forms or discrimination that have increased knowledge of a) quality essential services, and b) accompaniment/ support initiatives, including longer-term recovery services, within the last 12 months.	a) Girls with Knowledge of ES				Restrictions related to COVID 19 prevented the programme to conduct the monitoring activities in time for this reporting cycle on knowledge of essential services. The team is working actively to address this and reporting will be completed as soon as possible.
	0	3,081	Data not available	920	
	a) Women with Knowledge of ES				
	0	37,461	Data not available	580	
	a) Girls with Knowledge of Recovery Services				
	0	0	Data not available	0	
a) Women with Knowledge of Recovery Services					
0	1,728	Data not available	7,842		
<b>b) Girls with Access to ES</b>					
Indicator 4.2.2 Number of women and girl survivors/victims and their families, including groups facing multiple and intersecting forms or discrimination, that have increased ACCESS to a) to quality essential services and b) accompaniment/support initiatives, including longer-term recovery services, within the last 12 months	794	1,510	2,252	6,210	
	b) Women with Access to ES				
	1,104	2,286	1,215	8,974	
	b) Girls with Access to Recovery Services				
	0	0	0	0	
	b) Women with Access to Recovery Services				
0	0	0	0		

## Outcome 5 Summary table

Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
	Prevalence				
Indicator 5.1 Existence of globally comparable data on the prevalence (and incidence, where appropriate) of VAWG/HP, collected over time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Incidence				
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Output Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
Indicator 5.1.1 Number of National Statistical Offices that have developed/adapted and contextualized methods and standards at national level to produce prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG.	0	1	0	1	Planned activities were postponed as a results of COVID 19 restrictions banning in person meetings. The programme team is working actively to plan new activities in 2021.



Indicator 5.1.5 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to collect prevalence and/or incidence data, and qualitative data, on VAWG.	0	2	0	8	Planned activities were postponed as a results of COVID 19 restrictions banning in person meetings. The programme team is working actively to plan new activities in 2021.
Knowledge products					
Indicator 5.2.1 Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making, within the past 12 months.	0	4	0	16	Planned activities were postponed as a results of COVID 19 restrictions banning in person meetings. The programme team is working actively to plan new activities in 2021.
Indicator 5.2.4 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities on analysis and dissemination of prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG, within the last year.	0	2	0	8	Planned activities were postponed as a results of COVID 19 restrictions banning in person meetings. The programme team is working actively to plan new activities in 2021.

## Outcome 6 Summary table

Outcome Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
Indicator 6.1 Number of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and relevant CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, increase their coordinated efforts to jointly advocate on ending VAWG.	0	100	124	390	124 CSO participated in 2 days multistakeholders dialogues in the 5 Spotlight Counties that resulted in the development and endorsement of a resolution from the experience-sharing conference which was presented to key stakeholders.
Indicator 6.2 Extent to which there is an increased use of social accountability mechanisms by civil society in order to monitor and engage efforts to end VAWG.	0	3	1	6	Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia Shadow Report - Living up to CEDAW - Analysis of the status of Liberia.
Indicator 6.3 Proportion of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, report having greater influence and agency to work on ending VAWG.	0	30	300	50	

Output Indicator	Baseline	Milestone 2	Results for Reporting Period (2020)	Target	Reporting Notes
Indicator 6.1.1 Number of jointly agreed recommendations on ending VAWG produced as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year.	0	5	1	15	In 2020, one Civil Society Organizations Secretariat Network on SGBV presented a resolution to key stakeholder, including the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Internal Affairs which documented achievements, challenges, and recommendations for the Government of Liberia, Development Partners, Community Leaders, private sector and the media aimed at addressing increase cases of violence against women and girls in Liberia.
Indicator 6.1.2 Number of official dialogues about ending VAWG with relevant government authorities that include the full participation of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year.	0	0	0	10	
	Youth				
Indicator 6.1.3 Number of CSOs representing youth and other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that are integrated with coalitions and networks of women's rights groups and civil society working on ending VAWG, within the last year.	0	5	25	15	
	LNOB				
	0	3	6	6	

Indicator 6.1.4 Number of women's rights groups, networks and relevant CSOs with strengthened capacities to network, partner and jointly advocate for progress on ending VAWG at local, national, regional and global levels, within the last year.	13	10	300	30	300 women's rights groups, networks, and relevant CSO have their capacities strengthened to network, partner, and jointly advocate for progress on ending VAWG at all levels of society.
Indicator 6.2.1 Number of supported women's right groups and relevant CSOs using the appropriate accountability mechanisms for advocacy around ending VAWG, within the last year.	0	30	100	30	Shadow Reporting on CEDAW and other international instruments, including the UPR, the Community Score Card, and the Citizen Reporting Card, etc.
CSOs with strengthened capacities					
Indicator 6.3.1 Number of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization that have strengthened capacities and support to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on ending VAWG, within the last year.	0	0	124	30	124 Civil Society Organisations have increased their capacities to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on EVAWG after series of capacities building training conducted.